Power in the workplace: An investigation of the phenomena in industrial relations utilising data from an engineering company.

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An investigation of the phenomena in industrial relations utilising data from an Engineering Company

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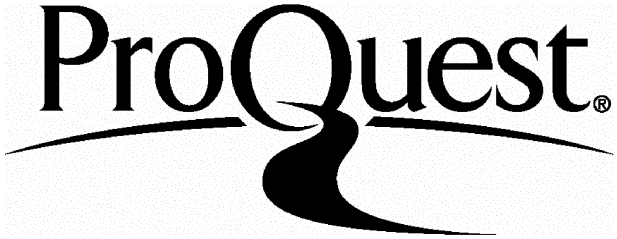

Summary

This thesis commences with a review, evaluation and critique of selected theories of power from the literature of sociology and political science. The partial nature of most of these theories and the various confusions and contradictions that surround them are described and the central themes extracted. These themes would have to be incorporated, explained and resolved by any alternative model of power. The major theories of power in the organisational theory and industrial relations are then reviewed. Attention is drawn to the lacuna surrounding power within the industrial relations tradition.

The various theories are then located in terms of their epistemological and methodological assumptions and their functionalist origins revealed. It is argued that any new model of power should focus upon alternative paradigms in order to relate the concepts of action and structure. Power is seen as a concept which is inherently related to the processes of social life. The theories of social action and social structure are then reconciled by the concept of 'levels of social life' and by the 'theory of structuration'. An alternative theoretical model is then developed in order to explain the operation of power in the workplace.

Data gathered from a research study in an engineering company is then presented. The research methodology which included tape-recording and direct observation is then described and evaluated. The data is structured in an attempt to describe, illustrate, illuminate and analyse the operation and processes of power within the workplace studied. An attempt is then made to integrate the understandings of power derived from field research and theoretical study respectively.

Contents

Prologue

"... nothing more can be attempted than to establish the beginning and direction of an infinitely long road. The pretension of any systematic and definitive completeness would be, at least, a self-illusion. Perfection can here be obtained by the individual student only in the subjective sense that he communicates everything he has been able to see". (Georg Simmel)

The research project can never be neatly divorced from its context. It, on the one hand, forms part of, or takes issue with, a tradition of intellectual theorising. On the other hand, it represents the position reached by the author at a particular point and as such is the product of the authors background and experiences. In this thesis a fairly explicit debate takes place with the various traditions of power theorising. Therefore this prologue will focus upon the intellectual history of the author and the development of the ideas contained in the thesis.

Others have used the notion of a 'journey' as a metaphor for the research process. Journeys do not just begin; they have a gestation period. A journey is initiated by a need, a want or a desire for knowledge. So it was with my research journey. The journey begins with the transition from school to work. For many young people this first step represents a radical change and requires a period of re-adjustment. It is perhaps fair to say that I was profoundly affected by this first step. Coming from a lower middle class background and a sheltered Grammar school environment I proceeded to a 'management traineeship' at a carton printing firm which involved extensive shop floor experience. Here was a completely new world which I found rather strange. Partly as a result

of this 'culture shock' and partly because of intellectual curiosity I began to question members of the organisation. My questions were not concerned with the technicalities of managerial science but, instead, were related to the concepts, which I only 'labelled' much later, of alienation, conflict, hierarchy, control and power. In my naive manner I was questioning some of the 'taken for granted' assumptions of industrial organisations and the answers given largely failed to satisfy my curiosity. I was beginning to form, in a vague manner, a variant of the Hobbesian question of how social order is possible. Thus I was concerned with how industrial order was possible. A series of broad questions began to develop. Why did the system work? Why did people accept their position within the system? What was the 'glue' that holds the system together? How was control exercised in organisations?

For a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the desire to find answers to my questions, I turned to academic study. First a degree in business studies specialising in manpower management and then, after a further period in the printing industry, a Masters degree in industrial relations. Upon completion of the latter I obtained a post as a research officer and began to contemplate doctoral research. At this stage I began to realise that, despite my education, I had not yet fully explained the questions which had earlier troubled me. I was also worried at the tendency in much of the industrial relations literature to focus upon large plants, conflict, strike activity and militancy which I considered, in many instances, to be atypical. With these thoughts in mind I originally submitted a draft proposal to do research on workgroup activity. I had become particularly interested in workgroups that appeared to possess a high degree of power (perhaps due to their position in the work process) and yet failed to exercise that

power in situations where it would be to their advantage. However early reading in the subject led me increasingly to concepts such as power and domination. Thus gradually the topic of my research became power and its operation in workplace industrial relations.

After my registration I began to research and review the literature on power and associated concepts. It soon became clear to me that power constituted a major lacuna in the industrial relations literature despite its centrality to the notion of an industrial relations system and its usage in bargaining theory. I therefore embarked upon a review of the literature in the field of organisational theory as well as the more general areas of sociology and political science. I was at this stage searching for a conceptual framework which would help me to understand the utilisation and operation of power at the level of the workplace. Instead of a single framework I was confronted by a plethora of different views of power which were both incomplete and, at times contradictory. The benefit of the exercise was that I was able to identify some crucial themes and problems which an alternative and integrated model of power should be able to encompass and resolve.

By this stage of the research project, time and my supervisor were both pressing me to commence fieldwork. My initial reticence to enter the 'field' without a framework disappeared when I started to realise that any alternative model of power could only emerge from insights generated during field research. Therefore I entered a research site, of which more details will be given later, and began to examine the processes of power as they occurred within one particular forum in the workplace setting.

Gradually I developed an outline model of power derived from observation and discussion in the field and from further reading in the literature. I initially conceived of power as having two distinct and separate components. The first referred to the possession, exercise and sources of power while the second referred to the reactions of those over whom power was exercised. I loosely termed these concepts 'power' and 'consciousness' respectively. They appeared to parallel Etzioni's (1961) notion of 'compliance' which refers both to the power employed by superiors and to the subsequent orientation of the subordinates to that power. I also realised that power could be considered both as a concept of 'action' and as a concept of 'structure'. Similarly the duality of social structure and social action could be applied to my notion of 'consciousness' or 'worker orientation'. However I soon saw that, given the constraints of a part-time doctoral research programme, it would be impossible to consider both power and aspects of consciousness. I therefore decided to focus upon the concept of power.

The production of a theoretical idea can be a complex and tortuous process. The model that I advance later in this thesis is the result of an often confusing interaction between data and theory. Thus on many occasions, incidents, actions or interviews in the field led to the development of vague notions or concepts which were noted, but often lay dormant until, at a later date, further reading refined them or put them into perspective. Similarly theoretical concepts derived from the literature were often abandoned or shelved only to be revived in the light of new data from the case study. Thus, for example, throughout the research I had adopted a notion of power operating on different levels but it was not until towards the end of the field research that a reading of Giddens (1978, 1979) enabled me to develop

the idea into a coherent model. Again the key concepts of rhetoric, legitimising arguments and ideology were not finally formulated in a systematic manner until after the fieldwork had been completed.

The theoretical model developed in this thesis must, therefore, be seen as the product of a complex process of interconnections between the insights suggested by data and the concepts derived from the literature. The theoretical model was developed neither before nor after the field research process but emerged during and as an integral part of it. It is a matter for some regret that the sequential nature of the thesis mitigates against capturing the essential interaction between literature and data. For reasons of clarity I have decided to discuss the theoretical side first and the data at a later stage. The purpose of the theoretical model advanced in this work is twofold. Firstly it is necessary in order to help remedy the existing lacuna concerning power in the industrial relations literature. It also serves to integrate some of the partial and diverse theories of power derived in other disciplines. In these senses the model is an end in itself. However the second purpose of the model is to enable the researcher to make sense of the operation of power within the work-place. It provides the conceptual tools to facilitate an understanding of the complex processes of power. In this sense the model is a means to an end.

I would like to return to the journey metaphor at this stage. During the course of a journey one is presented with a variety of routes, some of which turn out to be 'dead-ends' which take up precious time but lead nowhere. One is also confronted with a series of 'by-ways', which appear to be interesting but only serve to deviate the traveller from his original route. Both of these phenomena also occur in the research

process. Whilst taking the reader along these roads would serve the purpose of accurately depicting the research process, it would unduly distract from the argument that I hope to develop. Therefore this is an abbreviated version of the 'journey' which enjoys the benefit of the clarity that accompanies hindsight.

It is very difficult to reach an ending in the research journey, as the quote from Simmel at the beginning of this prologue suggests. The end of the research project is, in a sense, an artificial device forced upon the author by the constraints of time limits, resources and deadlines. The end is simply a statement of how far the author has travelled along a particular path. I hope, both in terms of the theoretical framework and the analysis of the operation of power, that this thesis had made advances upon the existing state of accepted knowledge in the industrial relations arena. Nevertheless there remains much more work to be done into the concept of power. Thus every ending is in fact another beginning.

The argument presented within this thesis proceeds as follows. Chapter One contains a review, evaluation and critique of selected theories of power from the literature of sociology and political science. It seeks to demonstrate the partial nature of most of these theories and the various confusions and contradictions that surround them. An attempt is made to extract the central themes and dichotomies from the literature. These themes and dichotomies would have to be incorporated explained and resolved by an alternative model of power.

Chapter Two consists of a review of the major theories of power and their utilisation in the organisational and industrial relations

literature. It seeks to identify the links between the more general socio-political literature and the theories of power contained in the organisational and industrial relations literature. An attempt is made to draw attention to the lacuna surrounding power within the industrial relations tradition. Finally Chapters One and Two together serve to identify theories of power which have interesting components but are incomplete.

Chapter Three attempts to locate the theories described in terms of their epistemological and methodological assumptions and in doing this seeks to trace and demonstrate their functionalist origins. It is suggested that any new model of power should focus upon alternative paradigms in order to link the notions of action and structure.

Chapter Four seeks to argue that power is a concept which is inherently related to the processes of social life. An attempt is made to show how the theories of social action and social structure can be reconciled by the concept of 'levels of social life' and by the 'theory of structuration'. Finally the Chapter develops an alternative theoretical model in order to explain the operation of power in the workplace.

Chapter Five introduces the research site and describes the organisation in some detail. There is also a discussion of the research methodology used in the course of the study. Chapter Six contains the empirical data gathered during the research study. The material is structured in an attempt to describe, illustrate, illuminate and analyse the

the operation and processes of power within one particular workplace.

Chapter 1

The general social and political theories of power

1.1 A review of the literature on power

The literature on power is extremely diverse and is located within many academic disciplines. Obviously it forms a central core of the literature in both political science and sociology. Thus the purpose of this Chapter is to present a critical review of the power literature contained within these two disciplines. In the next chapter a similar review will be presented of the power literature within the disciplines of economics, organisational theory and industrial relations. Given the voluminous academic literature and the multiplicity of common senses uses, it is impossible to present a complete review. Thus I have attempted to select those views of power which are central or seminal to a tradition of power theorising or offer a unique insight. Therefore an attempt has been made to commence with one of the most influential definitions of power and from that platform to trace the subsequent debates and developments in power theorising. Finally this chapter seeks to answer the following question. If one knew nothing at all about power (perhaps having arrived from another planet!), what impression and understanding of the concept would be gained from a reading of the academic literature? Thus this chapter hopes to extract the central themes from the various traditions of power theorising.

1.2 Weber's concept of power

It is always difficult to judge where to commence when attempting to chart the historical development of a concept or idea. However most modern writers on power, explicitly or implicitly, appear to take as a starting point the work of the German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920). Thus Weber is tacitly acknowledged as the originator of a tradition of power theorising.

This choice is interesting but perhaps slightly incongruous due to the confusion which surrounds his work in this area.

Firstly, Weber only briefly mentions the concept of power in his work, although he devotes a great deal of attention to closely related concepts and ideas such as the nature, bases and forms of authority. In his major theoretical work in sociology 'Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft' (1952)*, Weber only mentions power twice. In Part 1 he gives definitions of power and other associated concepts in a section on the basic concepts in sociology, while in Part 2 he makes a subsidiary reference to power. Secondly, Weber's definitions have been rendered differently by the various translators of his work. As MacRae (1974) points out, this is probably partially due to the obscure stylistic nature of Weber's prose as well as to deficiencies in his translators. However, whatever the cause, the result is that much of the early theoretical work on power is flawed by the conceptual confusion surrounding the term.

In Part 1, Section 16 of 'Wirtschaft Und Gesellschaft', Weber introduces three related terms. These are 'Macht', 'Herrschaft', and 'Legitime Herrschaft'. While the term 'Macht' has almost invariably been translated by commentators as 'power', the translations of the definition of 'Macht' have differed widely.

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* First totally translated into English as "Economy and Society: An outline of interpretive sociology" - edited by G. Roth and C. Wittich N.Y. Bedminster Press (1968).

In the original English translation Parsons and Henderson translate 'power' as:

"The probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests".
(Weber 1947: 139)

Referring to Weber's alternative reference in Part 2 of 'Wirtschaft Und Gesellschaft', Gerth and Mills offer the following translation:

"In general, we understand by power the chance of a man or of a number of men to realise their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action".
(Weber 1958: 180)

These then, are the original translations of both Weber's references to power.

From these original definitions a whole series of commentators have produced definitions purporting to be derived from Weber. Some originate in the Parsons and Henderson definition (1947), others follow the Gerth and Mills definition (1948), while others appear to be a synthesis of both. The following are some typical examples:

- T. Parsons (1968: 656): "The probability within a social relationship of being able to secure one's own ends even against opposition".
- H.P. Secher (1962: 117): "By power is meant that opportunity existing within a social relationship which permits one to carry out one's own will even against resistance and regardless of the basis on which this opportunity rests".

- R. Bendix (1962: 290): "The possibility of imposing one's own will upon the behaviour of other persons".
- P. Blau (1963): "The ability of a person to impose his will upon others despite resistance".
- R. Aron (1964: 101): "The chance of obtaining the obedience of others to a particular command".
- J. Freund (1969: 221): "The probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance".
- G. Roth and C. Wittich (Weber 1968: 926): "In general we understand by "power", the chance of a man or a number of men to realise their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action".

It can be seen from these definitions that some crucial differences in translation and interpretation exist. Some definitions presume the existence of conflict by use of the phrase "despite resistance" (Weber 1947, Blau 1963, Freud 1969) while others introduce the phrase "even against resistance (opposition)" which suggests that conflict is not a necessary condition (Weber 1948), Parsons 1968, Secher 1962, Weber 1968). Parsons and Henderson in their translation (Weber 1968) use the term "probability" whereas the Gerth and Mills translation (Weber 1968) uses "chance". Other commentators have rendered different translations of this term. Secher (1962) employs "opportunity", Bendix (1962) prefers "possibility" while Blau (1963) offers "ability". A number of definitions drastically change the meaning of Weber's original by omitting his final clause: "regardless of the basis on which this probabiliy rests". (Weber 1947).

Finally most definitions employ the phrase "social relationship" to indicate the social nature of the concept and its reciprocity but in the Gerth and Mills (1948) translation the term "communal action" is used, which has a completely different meaning.

Thus it may be argued that these are two basic problems with Weber's writing on power. Firstly he used two distinct, essentially different and partially contradictory views of power. These views were assimilated into the sociological literature in a piecemeal, confused and unrelated way. This has led to a plethora of definitions purporting to be derived from Weber. The second problem concerns the differences in the translation of Weber definitions. As Banton (1972) has remarked:

"A sociologist's approach to such questions has to begin with Max Weber's analysis..... It must start from what Weber wrote and not from Talcott Parsons's solution to the difficult problems of rendering the texts into English". (1972: 86)

In an attempt to resolve the translation problem, Walliman, Tatsis and Zito (1977) have attempted a definitive contextual (as well as literal) re-translation of Weber's major definition of power. They offer the following:

"Within a social relationship POWER means chance, (no matter whereon this chance is based) to carry through one's (individual or collective) own will (EVEN against resistance). (1977: 234)

The authors are forced to admit that this formulation is stylistically inelegant, but argue that it comes closest to Weber's original German meaning. It could, however, be suggested that such a re-translation presents as many problems as it solves and that the real objective

is to gain the 'essence' of Weber's concept and not a totally accurate translation.

Despite the conceptual problems outlined above, it is still possible to extract the major strands of Weber's notion of power. Firstly, power is the property of an actor. However, Weber also presumes that for power to be utilised a social relationship must exist between two actors or groups of actors. Thus defined, power is open to many different interpretations. If power is seen as the property of an individual actor, then it follows that power can be equated with potential to affect the behaviour of another. Thus power can be regarded as 'capacity'. However, the concept of power as embodied in a social relationship negates the notion of power as capacity. According to this view, power only exists when it is 'exercised' or 'realised' in a social relationship between two or more actors. Thus, if actor A is said to possess power over actor B, it must be possible to establish a relationship between them. This is largely unproblem-actic at the micro or individual level but raises problems of inter-pretation at the macro or collective level. Can an elite group be said to possess power if there are only tenuous links with those over whom they are said to exercise power? This problem, which surfaces in the work of Weber, pervades much of the later debate surrounding the nature of power.

Secondly, for Weber, power is related to the achievement of an actor's objectives or goals. This is a facet that most power theorists agree upon, although there is debate concerning whether the objectives are achieved by purposive action on the one hand or by 'non-action' or non-decision on the other hand.

Some theorists maintain that the former alone should count as an instance of power.

Thirdly, Weber argues that while conflict may exist between the actors in the social relationship, the existence of such conflict is not a necessary condition for power. Subsequent writers have often misread Weber and argued that conflict is an essential ingredient of power. Finally, Weber does not specify whether power stems from either the resources controlled by an actor or from the reactions and motives for compliance exhibited by the other actor. He thus draws no distinction between power bases and motive bases. Thus his original definition specifies "regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (1947: 139). Many subsequent theories have unfortunately focused upon either power bases (French and Raven 1959) or motive bases (Hamilton 1976) in isolation.

However, despite being able to delineate the main strands of Weber's notion of power it is important to remember that power (Macht) is only one of the terms used by Weber to describe certain properties of social relationships and social action. Thus, to understand Weber's conception of power in its widest sense, one has to examine his use of the terms 'Herrschaft' and 'Legitime Herrschaft'.

In the original Parsons and Henderson version 'Herrschaft' is translated as:
"the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons". (Weber 1947: 139)

Most commentators have used this definition. However, Secher utilises the following definition of the concept:

"By (Herrschaft) is meant that the opportunity to have a command of a given specific content obeyed by a given group of persons". (1962: 117)

While the definition of 'Herrschaft' is reasonably clear, there exists a great deal of confusion over the actual translation of the term itself and the associated concept of 'Legitime Herrschaft'. In the original translation Parsons and Henderson (Weber 1947) translate 'Herrschaft' as 'Imperative Control' and 'Legitime Herrschaft' as 'Authority'. Thus they translate the trilogy of Weber's terms as power, imperative control and authority. However, other commentators and translators have produced alternatives. In the Roth and Wittich version (Weber 1968) the three concepts are translated as 'power', 'domination' and 'authority' respectively. Another commentator d'Entrenes (1967) prefers the trilogy 'might', 'power' and 'authority'.

The central point to note is that Weber's three central concepts are logically related. 'Herrschaft' is a sub-set of 'Macht', while 'Legitime Herrschaft' is a sub-set of 'Herrschaft'. All three terms are related to forms and modes of 'compliance'. With 'Macht' there can be voluntary compliance or no voluntary compliance. This is inferred from Weber's use of the phrase "even despite resistance" which suggests that 'Macht' can exist whether conflict is present or not. However, in the case of 'Herrschaft', a minimum of voluntary compliance is assumed. Weber then proceeds to delineate a more specific form of 'Herrschaft' based on the assumption of legitimacy. Later in his work he outlines the bases upon which such legitimacy rests.

In order to fully understand Weber's concept of power and its associated concepts, one has to consider the context in which he developed his ideas. As Clegg (1975) notes:

"His definitions of Macht and Herrschaft are introduced among 'the fundamental concepts of sociology'. As such they are constituted within a particular mode of sociology, that of an 'interpretive sociology'. They occur after a discussion of social relationships, which is prefaced by a discussion of social action. Both these concepts are implicit in the definition he gives to Macht and Herrschaft". (1975: 57)

What, then, are the specific features of Weber's interpretive sociology? Weber defined it as a "science concerning itself with the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and consequences". (1968: 4). By causal explanation Weber meant that it should be possible to determine the probability that a given observable event will be followed or accompanied by another event. Thus, this notion of 'probability' was applied to the definition of a social relationship. As Weber argued: "Every social relationship thus consists entirely and exclusively in the existence of a probability that these will be a meaningful course of action - irrespective for the time being of the basis of this probability" (1968: 27). Thus, Macht and Herrschaft are defined in a similar way.

As Clegg has argued, if one wishes to fully understand Weber's notion of power, one has to take note of two further points. Firstly, Clegg argues that much of the confusion that surrounds Weber's use of Herrschaft disappears if it is translated as 'rule' rather than 'authority'.

Secondly, Weber also argues that action in a social relationship is 'oriented towards an 'order'. This order is contained in a 'structure of dominancy'. Thus for Weber power in organisations is embedded in a 'structure of dominancy'.

"Without exception every sphere of social action is profoundly influenced by structures of dominancy. In a great number of cases the emergence of a rational association from amorphous social action has been due to domination and the way in which it has been exercised. Even where this is not the case, the structure of dominancy and its unfolding is decisive in determining the form of social action and its orientation towards a 'goal'". (1968: 941)

Therefore, it can be suggested that Weber's notion of power is two-dimensional. The concept of Herrschaft as rule or authority views power as embodied in observable decision-making. The notion of a structure of dominancy opens the possibility for a 'hidden face' of power. Here power is located, not in the making of decisions, but in the processes whereby issues are presented from occurring by a variety of largely ideological means.

Perhaps the most important point about Weber is not the confusion which surrounds his work on power, but the fact that this confusion in some way typifies the problems of theorising about power and has pervaded the work of subsequent theorists as we shall see in the rest of this Chapter. Indeed as Clegg has remarked:

"That confusion exists as to the meaning in translation of 'power' in Weber's work is not to be taken as a need for definitive remedial work on Weber's texts. What makes Weber's work interesting as a topic is its continuing indexicality, and the various forms of

commitment it generates through the provocation that this offers to readers and authors to display their theorising on it. This theorising in turn serves to magnify and regenerate the contradictions inherent in Weber". (1975: 57)

1.3 The community power debate

The next major theoretical discussion of power emerged as a result of the so-called 'Community Power Debate' which arose in the 1950's. The debate centered upon the distribution of power in the local community, and, by association, in the society at large. Was power held by a single identifiable 'elite', or was it held plurally by different groups on different community issues? Although on the surface this appears to be an empirical debate, it in fact reflected a much more general debate on the nature of power. Thus, the parties to the community power debate can be seen to be reflecting an on-going debate between the two major schools in social theory; the Consensus theorists and the Conflict theorists. The Consensus view of power, also known as the 'pluralist view', is perhaps best typified by the work of Parsons (1957, 1963). Hiw view of power emerges during a critique of the notion of power held by Conflict theorists in general and C. Wright Mills in particular.

Conflict theorists, generally working from a quasi-marxist or radical perspective, argued that power in the local community or society at large was attributable to a small 'elite' group who sought to retain their power and use it to their own advantage. The most popular and famous example of this tradition was C. Wright Mills' "The Power Elite" (1956). Mills begins the book by stating that:

"As the means of information and of power are centralised, some men come to occupy positions in American society from which they can look down upon, so to speak, and by their decisions mightily affect the everyday worlds of ordinary men and women". (1956: 3).

He then proceeds to describe and analyse the ruling elite. Miliband summarised the central theme of the book as follows:

"...in America some men have enormous power denied to everyone else; that these men are, increasingly, a self-perpetuating elite; that their power is, increasingly, unchecked and irresponsible; and that their decision-making, based on an increasingly 'military definition of reality' and a 'crackpot realism' is oriented to nafarious ends". (1962: 16)

At this point there are several comments that need to be made about Mill's analysis. Firstly, nowhere in 'The Power Elite' does he explicitly define what he means by power, although it is possible to infer his view of power from his analysis. Mills appears to consider that the ability to control the decision-making arena as a form of power. In this respect Mills is a founder of a tradition of power as non-decision to be later developed by Bachrach and Baratz (1962). Secondly, it is important to note that Mills explicitly denied that he was a Marxist, although he was obviously centrally within the conflict tradition.

Parsons argues that Mills has misconceived the notion of power because he treats it as a 'Zero-sum' concept. This means that power is viewed as a finite resource, so that to the extent that one part has power, all others are prevented from possessing it.

Thus, Parsons argues, this perspective naturally views the exercise of power as serving sectional interests. Parsons suggests that power is more accurately conceived by analogy with a non-zero sum concept; in other words, a situation where both (or all) parties may gain. This stems form his concept of power as being 'generated' by the social system in a similar way as wealth is generated in productive organisation in the economy. By this analogy with money, Parsons wishes to make two important points. Firstly, power can be 'shared' among several parties; each party or actor possessing a different amount of power. Secondly, power is not a finite thing; the amount of power generated can change in relation to the structure and organisation of the society.

In one of his later works, Parsons defines power as:

"Generalised capacity to serve the performance of binding obligations by units in a system of collective organisation where the obligations are legitimised with references to their bearing on collective goals". (1963: 237)

This is a typical piece of convoluted Parsonian prose. Giddens explains Parsons' position much more clearly as follows:

"Just as money has 'value' because of common 'agreement' to use it as a standardised mode of exchange, so power becomes a facility for the achievement of collective goals through the 'agreement' of the members of a society to legitimise leadership positions and to give those in such positions a mandate to develop policies and implement decisions in the furtherance of the goals of the system. Parsons emphasises that this conception of power is at variance with the more

usual 'Zero-sum' notion which has dominated thinking in this field". (1968: 259)

Thus for Parsons, power is centrally related to authority, in that authority becomes the institutionalised legitimation that underlies power.

In fact, the concepts of authority and legitimation are so central for Parsons that he cannot accept the notion of 'illegitimate' power. As Parsons puts it:

"..the threat of coercive measures, or of compulsion, without legitimation or justification, should not properly be called the use of power at all, but is the limiting case where power, losing its symbolic character, merges into an intrinsic instrumentality of securing compliance with wishes, rather than obligations". (1963: 250)

As we shall see later, this is rather a narrow and limited notion of power.

Parsons' critique of the 'Zero-sum' view of power contains a number of useful insights into the nature of power. Firstly, he is undoubtedly correct to argue that power is not synonymous with its utilisation. Thus a group may be powerful and yet rarely have to use their force. Or to put it the other way around, the continued need to exercise power may point to the existence of a weak basis for power. It is important to note that on this issue Parsons differs from the other major theorist in the consensus/pluralist camp; Dahl (1957/1961) working in a behaviourist model argues that power can only exist if it can be observed and measured. Secondly, Parsons demonstrates that a group can wield power while having few coercive sanctions available to rein-

force their rule. This is possible if the group holding power has their position legitimised by those subject to their power. As Giddens describes it:

"In such circumstances, the party in power depends, not on the possession of coercive sanctions with this it can override non-compliance, but sheerly upon the recognition by the subordinate party or parties of its legitimate right to take authoritative decisions. The latter in some sense acquiesce in their subordination". (1968: 262)

However Parsons does not seem to consider that this legitimation or consensus may be 'created' by the ruling group and not freely given by the subjects.

Despite his valuable insights, it must be stated that Parsons' view of power is fatally flawed. As Giddens has brilliantly argued:

"...What slips away from sight almost completely in the Parsonian analysis is the very fact that power, even as Parsons defines it, is always exercised over someone. By treating power as necessarily (by definition) legitimate, and thus starting from the assumption of consensus of some kind between power-holders and those subordinate to them, Parsons virtually ignores, quite consciously and deliberately, the necessarily hierarchical character of power, and the division of interest which are frequently consequent upon it". (1968: 264)

Thus the Parsonian definition of power is incapable of dealing with conflict. Parsons ignores clashes of interest and the fact that power can be exercised 'over' someone. He escapes dealing with these issues, which are difficult for him, by defining power as being related

to authority and legitimation. Yet his analysis ignores the fact that authoritative decisions can serve sectional interests and that most conflicts in society are in fact struggles for power.

As has already been noted, the two competing schools of social theory, the Consensus and the Conflict, meet not only at a macro, theoretical level but also at the more micro level of the 'Community Power Debate'. Here the consensus school is represented largely by political scientists who adopted a 'pluralist' view of power. Thus for them, power is widely distributed in the local community between a plurality of interest groups. The conflict school is largely represented by sociologists who adopted an 'elitist' view of power. Thus for them power is held by an 'elite' group in the local community.

Perhaps the best way in which to illustrate the debate is to briefly consider two of the seminal works in their respective fields. The major empirical work on the 'Elitist' side was the study of Regional City by Floyd Hunter (1953). Hunter's methodology consisted of selecting a list of leaders from various sources including documents and interviews. This list was then narrowed down after discussions with prominent city leaders until a list of 'key' leaders emerged. These leaders were then interviewed and questioned concerning the influence and power of the other people on the list. This form of analysis became known as the 'Reputational' approach and came to characterise the approach of sociologists to the study of community power. From his data Hunter was able to identify a 'ruling elite' in Regional City.

Dahl (1961) chose the town of New Haven, Conneticut for his classic 'pluralist' study. He used a different method to ascertain the distribution of power in the local community. The central thrust of Dahl's method was:

"To examine a set of 'decisions' in different 'issue-areas' in order to determine what kinds of persons were the most influential according to one operational measure of relative influence, and to determine patterns of influence". (1961: 331)

Subsidiary to this was the need to:

"...survey random samples of participants in different issue areas in order to determine their characteristics". (1961: 331)

Thus Dahl uses what is known as the 'Decision-Making' methodology and focuses upon observable behaviour on different key issues in order to assess power. This methodology characterises the approach of political scientists to the study of power in the local community. Dahl's results are totally different from those of Hunter. Dahl finds in New Haven the existence of a political

"system dominated by many different sets of leaders, each having access to a different combination of political resources. It was, in short, a pluralist system". (1961: 86)

Thus, these two studies, by authors from different disciplines, using different methodologies and different background notions of power, arrived at different conclusions as to the distribution of power in the local community. However, these are not the only studies on each side of the debate. Other studies which support the 'conflict' or 'elitist' model include the Middletown studies (Lynd and Lynd 1929,

1937); the Yankee City Studies (Warner and Lunt 1941/1942, Warner and Srole 1945, Warner and Low 1947, Warner 1959); Baltzell's 'Philadelphia Gentleman' (Baltzell 1958); and the study of Pacific City (Miller 1958). Other studies which support the 'pluralist' thesis include Polsby (1963) and Wolfinger (1974).

The community power debate can be subjected to two major criticisms. Firstly, it may be argued that the results of the researchers are dependent upon their theoretical model of power. Thus Polsby (1963) suggests that what

"...social scientists presume to be the case will in great measure influence the design and even the outcome of their research". (1963: 6)

In particular, he argues that the theoretical model of power assumed by the conflict/elitist researchers leads them to 'discover' ruling elites, despite the evidence. Thus, he suggests that their research is a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, unfortunately for Polsby, exactly the same critique can be applied to pluralists, their theoretical assumption of power diffusion leading to the 'discovery' of a plurality of interests at the local level.

Secondly, it may be argued that the use of different methodologies by both sides has led to confusion and the obtaining of different results. Walton (1966) after examining 33 different studies into community power, has demonstrated that the use of the 'reputational' method tends to be associated with the identification of a power 'elite', while the use of the 'decision-making' method tends to lead to the discovery of a pluralist distribution of power in an amorphous or factional manner.

Walton has also shown that the 'reputational' method is largely used by sociologists, while the 'decision-making' method is favoured by political scientists. Thus, it may be suggested that the Community Power Debate is 'method-bound'.

However, in order to characterise the debate, it is possible to go further. It may be argued that the discovery of a particular methodology is not solely related to academic discipline, but is also related to theoretical perspective or adherence to one of the major social theories. Thus, it may be argued that in the Community Power Debate, discipline affects theoretical perspective which determines choice of method, which tends to determine results. This can be illustrated by Figure 1.

SOCIOLOGISTS → CONFLICT/ELITIST MODEL → REPUTATIONAL METHOD → POWER ELITE

POLITICAL SCIENTISTS → CONSENSUS/PLURALIST MODEL → DECISION-MAKING MODEL → PLURAL DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

Figure 1.1 Method, model and discipline in the community power debate

Thus, ranged on one side of the debate are researchers, mostly sociologists by discipline, who adopt a conflict model of society and who in their empirical work utilise the reputational method. These parameters lead them to a particular conception of power which sees it as the property of a small elite group in any society. Their notion of power is thus a 'Zero-Sum' concept, in that, to the extent that an elite group possess power, then this is not available to other groups in the society.

Therefore, there exists a power imbalance in our society. There is a tendency for these researchers to see power as synonymous with coercion.

On the other side of the debate are the political scientists who adopt a consensus model of society and who in their empirical work utilise the decision-making methodology. These assumptions lead them to a pluralist view of power. Power is diffused throughout society and is distributed between various interest groups. Following Parsons, power is seen as a 'non-Zero-sum' concept in that it can be 'generated' within the social system.

Thus, it can be argued that one's notion of power is determined in part by one's ideological and methodological premises. However, one can further argue that what divides the two sides is a different epistemology. As Clegg has said:

"We might want to argue that any such controversy may be seen instead to arise from the lack of agreement between political scientists and sociologists as to what counts as "correct procedure" for producing what counts as "factual knowledge" as divorced from knowledge which is hearsay, heresy, gossip, ideology or repute, rather than "reality" ... What we would appear to have here is ... a lack of agreement among power study practitioners of what power is, and how it ought to be studied, and how such studies ought to be interpreted". (1976: 69)

Thus, both sides are working from different epistemological positions and, therefore, the inability to reconcile their views of power is not simply attributable to poor research, use of different methodologies

and possession of certain ideologies, but is, at base, only explicable if one takes cognizance of these epistemological differences.

A few final comments on the importance of the community power debate are in order. Firstly, it focused attention on the need for more theoretical work on power and brought Dahl's view of power to the fore. This will be discussed in the next section. Secondly, Dahl's 1961 study was assumed to have shown the elitist view to be incorrect, once and for all. In fact, it merely led to a more sophisticated version of the elitist theory being produced. We can now move on to discuss Dahl's theoretical view of power.

1.4 Dahl on power

Dahl's concept of power originates in his 1957 paper entitled "The Concept of Power". Dahl, although acknowledging the work of Weber, prefers to try a new definition based upon a common sense and intuitive notion of the nature of power:

> "My intuitive idea of power, then, is something like this: A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do". (1957: 202-203)

Dahl explicitly states that he will try to avoid the equation of power with cause. However, he appears to deviate from this intention. By 1968 he is arguing that:

> "The closest equivalent to the power relation is the causal relation. For the assertion 'C has power over R', one can substitute the assertion, 'C's behaviour causes R's behaviour". (1968: 410)

Dahl proceeds to suggest that power is a social relationship between actors. To merely specify the actors in a power situation is, however, not very useful. Thus, he suggests that an attempt needs to be made to consider the following dimensions of power: the bases of power, the means of power, the amount or extent of power and the range or scope of power. Dahl then proceeds to specify some properties of the power relationship. Firstly, he argues that for power to exist there must be a time 'lag', however small, between the actions of the actor who is exercising power and the response of the actor subjected to it. Secondly, he suggests that there:

"... is no 'action at a distance'. Unless there is some 'connection' between A and a, then no power relation can be said to exist". (1957: 204)

Finally, Dahl slightly alters his original notion of power by suggesting that power seems:

"...to involve a successful attempt by A to get a to do something he would not otherwise do". (1957: 204)

Here Dahl seems to equate power with its application, whereas in his original definition power seems to refer to capacity or potential.

Dahl then proceeds to examine the central problem of power comparability. How is one to measure the relative power of two different individuals or groups? Dahl puts forward five factors which could be considered when making such a comparison:

"... (1) differences in the basis of their power, (2) differences in means of employing the basis, (3) differences in the scope of their power, i.e. in type of response evoked, (4) differences in the number of comparable respondants, and (5) differences in the change in probabilities..." (1957: 205-206)

In a paper the following year, Dahl engaged in a critique of the ruling elite model of power favoured by C. Wright Mills and Floyd Hunter. In the course of this critique, Dahl further develops his own theoretical notion of power. He points out that power is related to scope. Thus, merely because an individual or a group exerts power over one decision, it does not follow that they will exhibit power in respect of other decisions. Thus Dahl argues that:

"Neither logically or empirically does it follow that a group with a high degree of influence over one scope will necessarily have a high degree of influence over another scope within the same system. This is a matter to be determined empirically. Any investigation that does not take into account the possibility that different elite groups have different scopes is suspect". (1958: 465)

Thus Dahl's empirical work focuses on a number of different observable issues and attempts to determine which actors are able to exert power over these issues. Secondly, partially rejecting his original definition of power as capacity, Dahl argues that potential power must not be equated with actual power. Potential power, he argues, can only be realised if the group concerned has a corresponding potential for unity. This is confusing, as Dahl has not really discounted potential power, but has only specified a necessary condition for its existence. Finally Dahl appears to reject the idea that any one group or elite could establish total dominance and hence some form of false consciousness.

To summarise Dahl's theoretical view of power, one can make several points. Dahl appears confused as to whether power is to be equated with potential capacity or merely its actual employment in a specific situation in relation to a particular issue. Yet, in his empirical work, Dahl solely focuses upon the way in which power is exercised. His method in 'Who Governs' was to:

"...determine for each decision which participants had initiated alternatives that were finally adopted, had vetoed alternatives initiated by others, or had proposed alternatives that were turned down. These actions were then tabulated as individual 'successes' or 'defeats'. The participants with the greatest proportion of successes out of the total number of successes were then considered to be the most influential". (1961: 336)

Thus, for Dahl, the stress is upon the study of concrete, observable behaviour. Dahl also appears to assume that for power to be exercised, there must be a conflict of interests between the parties. Thus it is:

"a necessary though possibly not a sufficient condition that the (key) issue should involve actual disagreement in preferences among two or more groups". (1958: 467)

Lukes (1947) has termed Dahl's approach the one-dimensional view of power and describes it as involving:

"... a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation". (1974: 15)

Having described Dahl's notion of power, we can now move on to a critique of his theoretical view. Perhaps the major source of most critiques of Dahl is focused upon his behaviourist conception of power and in particular his stress on causality. Originally Dahl attempted to keep power and causation apart. In his 1957 paper he states that he will:

"...therefore quite deliberately steer clear of the possible identity of 'power' with 'cause', and the host of problems this identity might give rise to". (1957: 203)

Dahl is quite correct to identify causation as an abyss, but he seems unable to pull away from the edge. In 1965 Dahl suggests that power as one of the key concepts in political science is "strictly causal" (1965: 88).To put it another way, he argues in the same paper that:

"... a relationship of power, influence, control or authority is a causal relation among two or more human actors". (1965: 89)

Thus for Dahl, power and cause seem inextricably intertwined.

Dahl's equation of power with causation is not novel. Ball (1975, 1976) has traced this notion of power back through Hume and Lock to Hobbes. Hobbes states that:

"Power and Cause are the same thing. Correspondant to cause and effect, are POWER and ACT; nay those and these are the same things". (1839: x, p.127).

Ball suggests that the model which underlies the Hobbesian view of causation and power is:

"... that of matter in motion, of forces in collision, of bodies pushing (agents) and being pushed ('potients')". (1975: 215)

In other words, Hobbes' notions are based upon metaphors drawn from classical Galilean mechanics. Dahl in one work specifically confronts the historical origins of his concept of power. He admits that his:

"...way of thinking about power or influence is analogous to the concept of force in mechanics. In mechanics object A exerts a force on object B if A produces a change in the velocity of B. Galileo's famous law of inertia states that a body left to itself will move with a uniform velocity in one and the same direction. Any change in the velocity of a body, then, indicates the presence of a force. And the size of the force is proportional to the size of the change in velocity". (1963: 41)

Thus power is viewed in the mechanical imagery of push and shove, contact and collision.

The adoption of this metaphor for the analysis of social power has several unfortunate consequences. The first, which has already been discussed, is that power is seen as being equated to causation. Ball has suggested that

"the characterisation of power as a species or subset of causal relations is systematically distorted and misleading in its theoretical exclusivity". (1976: 192)

Similar arguments against the notion of power as causation have been voiced by Gibson (1971), Lukes (1974) and Clegg (1975, 1979).

The second problem of the mechanistic metaphor is the assumption that for power to exist C's power attempt must precede, by a time-lag however small, the responses of R. As Dahl asserts:

"A necessary condition for the power relationship is that there exists a time lag, however small, from the actions of the actor who is said to exert power to the responses of the respondent ... C can hardly be said to have power over R unless C's power attempts precede R's responses". (1957: 204)

However, the fallacy in this argument is the assumption that only events can be causes. As we shall demonstrate later, it is perfectly possible for non-events to be examples of power. Ball is surely correct when he states that:

"In stipulating that causes must be events, Dahl ... and ... others have narrowed unduly, and done violence to, our multifarious conception of causation; and if power is, as they maintain, a causal notion, then we might expect their conception of power to be an unduly narrow one". (1976: 196)

One result of Dahl's insistence that only events can be causes, is that the case of total power or domination where the rule is never challenged and therefore no power 'attempts' have to be made, cannot be considered as an example of power.

The third implication of the mechanistic metaphor is that it logically leads to a 'behavioural' view of power where the observable 'actions' or 'behaviour' of the powerful are related to the 're-actions' of the subordinated actors. As Clegg has noted, Dahl has:

"... tried to develop a behavioural political science. His model of man is derived from epistemological considerations which seek to limit our knowledge of other men to what we can perceive and measure". (1975: 20)

Thus, for Dahl the notions of 'latent' or 'reserve' power do not exist. Something must be 'exercised' in a specific situation if it is to count as a case of power.

The final implication of the mechanistic metaphor utilised by Dahl concerns the problem of 'action at a distance'. According to Dahl's view of causation, the prior movement of one thing can be said to 'cause' the change in the movement of position of another only if it first exhibits some 'contact' or 'connection'. As Ball puts it:

"The problem is this: If power relations are causal relations, and if causation is understood primarily in mechanistic terms, then what, in political-scientific discourse, corresponds to the mechanists principle of 'no action at a distance'?". (1975: 219)

The answer appears to be 'communication'. Thus if there is no communication between the actors, then power cannot be said to exist. This, however, again prevents total power or domination (where there may be no regular communication between dominators and dominated) from inclusion as a form of power. This view of power also gives rise to other problems and leads Ball to argue that:

"... this understanding of communication as a 'causal' mechanism is egregously confused. For among other things, all human communications are, in this view, either successful or unsuccessful 'power attempts'". (1975: 220)

It may be argued that Dahl and his fellow theorists misconceive power because they are trapped in a particular metaphor or model of the world. This model has certain implications for the understanding of causation and thus power. Yet it is unlikely that 'cause' and 'power' are concepts with single meanings. If Dahl could look beyond the vistas of classical mechanics, there may be other metaphors and models which could further illuminate the concept of power. In the debate over causation in science Hanson (1969) suggests that we:

"Speculate what our ideas of cause and effect might have been had melting butter been our model instead of billiard balls. As it is, the world may seem to us to be a succession of clicks, pushes, ticks and tocks. Had the melting of butter or wax seized our imagination instead, the world would have appeared to us as a series of simmerings, drippings, meltings, and splashes..."
(1969: 282-283)

Thus different analogies could yield fresh insights into the nature of power.

1.5 Exchange theories of power

Immediately subsequent to the Community Power Debate and its conflicting views of power, there arose a third theoretical strand. This was the exchange view of power as developed by Emerson (1962) and Blau (1964). Indeed it has been argued, (Jessop 1969) that the assertion that there are only two major perspectives in social theory - the consensus and conflict models - is incorrect. He suggests that exchange theory can act as a point of convergence between the two models and enable a genuine synthesis in social theory.

While it will be argued in this work that Jessop is mistaken in his belief, it is undeniably true that exchange theory has a distinctive character and as will be shown later, has deeply permeated the literature of industrial relations.

Emerson (1962) begins his work on power with an acknowledgement to Weber. However he sees Weber as providing a typology and not an organised theory of power. Emerson also takes issue with what he sees to be the central flow of most work on social power; that most theories treat power as an 'individualistic' notion. Thus power is attributed to individuals or groups. This leads to actors being 'ranked' according to the amount of power that they 'hold' and the development of a power structure. However, Emerson wishes to argue that power cannot simply be possessed by an individual or group. It must always be power 'over' someone. Thus:

"Power is a property of the social relation; it is not an attribute of the actor". (1962: 32)

Dahl, while recognising that this was the case, did not take the analysis to its logical conclusion. According to Emerson:

"Social relations commonly entail ties of mutual dependence between the parties. A depends upon B if he aspires to goals or gratification whose achievement is facilitated by appropriate actions on B's part". (1962: 32)

Thus, in this situation, it is essential for each actor to be able to control or affect the other's behaviour. At the same time, to take the other side of the coin, each actor is in a position to facilitate or deny the other's goals and gratification. Thus:

"... It would appear that the power to control or influence the other resides in control over the things he values ... In short, power resides implicitly in the other's dependency". (1962: 32)

Therefore, suggests Emerson, there are two main variables which need to be defined: dependency and power. Emerson defines these as follows:

"Dependence (Dab). The dependence of actor A upon actor B is (1) directly proportional to A's motivational investment in goals mediated by B, and (2) inversely proportional to the availability of those goals to A outside the A-B relation ... Power (Pab). The power of actor A over actor B is the amount of resistance on the part of B which can be potentially overcome by A". (1962: 32)

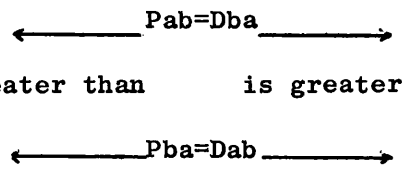
At this stage, two important points can be made. Firstly, unlike Dahl's analysis this definition of power does not necessarily equate power with observable behaviour. It can also be a potential or capacity for power which is employed occasionally. However, Emerson suggests that power will only be 'empirically manifest' if A makes a demand of B. Thus he appears to be arguing that there are two forms of power, but only one is empirically testable. He also suggests that power is not empirically manifest unless A's demand runs counter to B's desires. Thus, like Dahl, Emerson appears to assume that for power to exist there must be a conflict of interests between the actors. Secondly, Emerson explicitly states that his conception of power is wider than that of Parsons, in that it does not restrict itself to 'legitimate power' but views this as one form of power amongst many.

Emerson then presents his power dependence relationship as a pair of equations:

Pab=Dba

Pba=Dab

These can be balanced so that the power of A over B is equal to the power of B over A due to their equal dependence, or unbalanced as in the following example:



In this example, equilibrium can be restored by increasing the dependence of A on B (Dab) or reducing the dependence of B on A (Dba). As the relationship is reciprocal there are four possible courses of action open. Firstly, B could reduce his desires or needs for the goals or services controlled by A. Secondly, B could obtain alternative sources of these goals or services. Thirdly, B could attempt to increase A's dependence on him by making available new goals or services to A. Finally, the situation would be restored to equilibrium if A were to be denied alternative sources of his desired goals or services.

The concept of exchange is developed and utilised much more widely by Blau (1964). He suggests that social exchange is a central factor in social theory. Thus he argues:

"The concept of social exchanges directs attention to the emergent properties in interpersonal relations and social interaction... Exchange is here conceived as a social process of central significance in social life, which is derived from simpler processes and from which more complex processes are in turn derived". (1964: 4)

For social exchange to occur two conditions need to be met. Firstly, actors must desire goals/ends which are only attainable via interaction. Secondly, actors must seek to adapt means to further the achievement of those ends.

Blau then proceeds to apply the concept of exchange to the study of power. Proceeding from Weber's definition Blau argues that, broadly defined:

"...power refers to all kinds of influence between persons or groups". (1964: 115)

However, he wishes to suggest that coercive power, which depends upon the threat of sanctions, is analytically different from influence which is based upon the use of rewards. Thus he proposes the following definition of power:

"... It is the ability of persons or groups to impose their will on others, despite resistance, through deterrence either in the forms of withholding regularly supplied rewards or in the form of punishment, inasmuch as the former as well as the latter constitute, in effect, a negative sanction". (1964: 117)

It can be seen that this definition draws heavily both on Weber's work (ability ... to impose ... will on others, despite resistance) and on the work of Emerson. However, Blau's definition is wider than Emerson's as it includes punishment as well as the situation where an actor controls goals or services desired by the other. Several other points should be noted in reference to Blau's definition. Firstly, following Parsons (1963) he argues that power refers to the ability of an individual or a group to 'recurrently' impose his/their will on

others, not to a single such instance, however important. Secondly, he emphasises the voluntary nature of power. Although punishment is threatened, compliance may not be secured because the actor may decide to accept the punishment rather than comply. Thus, power in this definition is differentiated from 'pure' physical coercion. Finally, Blau suggests that power is a 'net' concept; thus actors powers and dependencies can be aggregated to produce a 'net' figure which is a measure of their power.

Blau then proceeds to develop a schema for 'power-dependence' relations based upon a reformulation of the work of Emerson. This is presented below in diagrammatic form.

Figure 1.2 Blau's theory of 'power-dependence' relations

ALTERNATIVES TO COMPLIANCE	CONDITIONS OF INDEPENDENCE	REQUIREMENTS OF POWER	STRUCTURAL IMPLICATIONS
Supply Inducements	Strategic resources	Indifference to what others offer	Exchange and distribution of resources
Obtain elsewhere	Available alternatives	Monopoly over what others need	Competition and exchange rates
Take by force	Coercive force	Law and order	Organisation and differentiation
Do without	Ideals lessening needs	Materialistic and other relevant values	Ideology formation

(Blau 1964: 124)

Blau starts by considering actor A who has need of a service that actor B has to offer. B makes certain demands of A if he is to furnish him with the service. If A wishes to avoid compliance with B's demands, then he has four possible courses of action. Firstly, A can supply B with a service that B wants so badly that he will offer his service in return, abandoning his demands. Secondly, A could attempt to find another supplier of the service other than B. Thirdly, A could force B to furnish the service, provided that he was capable of doing so. Finally, A could perhaps do without the service of B or find a substitute for it. Blau then argues that this schema can be used to indicate the conditions of social independence, the requirements of power and the structural implications of these alternatives.

Thus, if A is to utilise one of the four possibilities to compliance with B's demands, then certain conditions must be fulfilled if that independence is to be achieved. Thus, if A hopes to supply B with an inducement, then he must have the available resources to do so. To put it more generally, the greater the amount of strategic resources an actor possesses, the less dependent, and therefore, the more powerful they are. Secondly, if A is attempting to avoid compliance by seeking the service elsewhere, then this assumes that there are alternative sources of supply to hand and that B is not a monopoly position. Blau points out that this condition is not as stringent as it appears. An employee may remain in his job because of the lack of suitable or equally rewarding jobs elsewhere. Thirdly, if A is to force B to provide the service, then this depends upon A's ability to use coercive force. A's ability to use force may be increased by forming coalitions capable of enforcing demands.

Finally, if A is to do without B's service, it may be the case that an ideology or ideal is helpful to A to enable him to rationalise his loss.

Blau then considers the other side of the relationship. If B is to retain power over A, he must prevent him from choosing one of the four alternatives to compliance. Thus in the first case B will retain power if he is indifferent to what A has to offer. In the second case B must possess a near monopoly over the thing or service A needs. Thirdly B must be able to resist coercive force or take appropriate action (such as an employer discouraging unionisation) to prevent coalitions which would result in increased force. Finally, if B can promote values which support or enhance demand for his service, then A will find it harder to do without. Thus, in capitalist economies, great stress is placed on materialistic values to ensure continuing consumption growth and prevent a potentially disastrous fall in consumption which could destroy the system.

Finally, Blau suggests that each of the alternatives leads to the analysis of some basic problems in social structure:

"First, the fact that benefits can be obtained by reciprocating for them with others directs attention to the study of exchange processes and the distribution of resources. Secondly, the exploration of alternative opportunities points to the investigation of the emerging exchange structure, the competitive processes in them, the going rates of exchange, and the normative standards that tend to develop. Third, the study of coercive power raises questions concerning the establishment of coalitions and organisations to mobilise power,

the differentiation of power in social structures, and the processes that govern the struggle over political power in a society. Fourth, the ability to get along without something originally needed calls attention to the modifications of social values that occur under various conditions, the formation of new ideologies, and conflicts between ideologies". (1964: 123-124)

It is at this point possible to evaluate the exchange theories of power and place them in context. It is undoubtedly true that in many ways these theories are an improvement over earlier ones and provide us with useful insights into the notion of power. For example, they suggest that power does not necessarily equate with observable behaviour; nor is power solely concerned with the arena of 'legitimate power'. Thus exchange theories are an improvement upon the theories of Dahl and Parsons respectively. The exchange theories are also important in that they led to the development of yet more theories. The stress on dependency originating here, can be seen developed in the 'Strategic Contingencies' theory to be described later. Perhaps the most important point in relation to this work is that forms and derivations of exchange theory have been much utilised in the field of industrial relations. They have usually taken the form of bargaining models between management and unions. These will be examined in Chapter 2.

What then do the various exchange theories contribute to our understanding of power? The underlying assumption is that each party to a potential exchange has something which the other wants and values. Each party wishes the other to make the greatest contribution, but neither wants the exchange to be discontinued.

Thus, as we will see later, this seems to be firmly located in a pluralist tradition of power.

One important aspect of the exchange theories is that they see power as the property of a recurrent social relationship and as a 'net' concept where dependencies on both sides can be totalled to determine the relative power balance of the participants. They also assume that each party desires something controlled by the other and that thus a conflict of interests is present. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to see that these assumptions are present in the field of industrial relations and thus many of the implicit notions of power used in that discipline are derived from this tradition of power and developed as 'bargaining models' of power.

Finally, the exchange theories see power as the property of a social relationship between two parties. These parties can be individuals or collectivities. Yet it may be argued that most of the research in this tradition has focused either on individuals or small groups within organisations. Thus, most research is micro in dimension. However, if one re-examines Blau's schema, it will be seen that an alternative reading is possible using the Marxist tradition. In so far as the Marxist position is predicated upon the notion of an antagonistic, unequal exchange relationship between two classes, then this 'macro' view of power and dependence can be viewed in the exchange manner. Thus, if one assumes that a Ruling Class A controls and directs, directly or indirectly, a Subordinate Class B, then Class B can either comply with the control of Class A or attempt to avoid compliance by use of one of the four methods listed by Blau. In doing so, they have to be aware that the Ruling Class A have certain resources which they control,

which preserves their power, and that there are certain criteria of independence, which the Subordinated Class B need to achieve, if they are to avoid compliance with the control of Class A.

There are certain criticisms of the exchange approach to power. As Clegg and Dunkerley have argued:

"Although exchange theories provide us with a way of seeing exchanges occurring, they have nothing to say about the rules governing exchange processes, nor how these operate, nor how they have developed". (1980: 450)

While the exchange theories enable us to understand the power balance in a situation between two parties and perhaps even help to predict the outcome, they do not demonstrate how the particular social (power) relationship arose. This power is seen as related to resources controlled and dependencies but no explanation is given for the current distribution of those resources and associated dependencies.

1.6 The two dimensional view

In 1962 Bachrach and Baratz produced their seminal paper entitled "The Two Faces of Power" in which they develop their argument that there exist two distinct faces of power. They see their work as a critique of both positions in the Community Power Debate: elitist and pluralist. They suggest that the 'elitist' sociologists in the debate see neither face of power, while the 'pluralist' political scientists see only one face. Thus, they formulate their theory of power upon a critique of both the elitist and pluralist positions.

Dahl proposed that power be restricted to observable behaviour concerned with the making of concrete decisions, but Bachrach and Baratz argue that power cannot be restricted to such situations. Power is, of course, exercised when one actor participates in the making of decisions that affect another. But for Bachrach and Baratz power:

"...is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. To the extent that A succeeds in doing this, B is prevented, for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A's set of preferences". (1962: 948)

Thus Bachrach and Barataz argue that power refers also to the ability of a person or group, whether consciously or unconsciously, to prevent another from raising issues. Bachrach and Baratz approvingly quote Schattschneider:

"All forms of political organisation have a bias in favour of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organisation is the mobilisation of bias. Some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out". (1960: 71)

This introduces the important concept of 'mobilisation of bias' into the study of power. Bachrach and Baratz describe this concept as:

"A set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals, and institutional procedures ('rules of the game') that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups at the

expense of others. Those who benefit are placed in a preferred position to defend and promote their vested interests". (1970: 43-4)

Discussion of the 'mobilisation of bias' leads on to the concept of 'non-decision-making'. Certain individuals or groups may participate more in the process of 'non-decision-making' than they do in making actual decisions. Surely these individuals or groups are exhibiting power?

Bachrach and Baratz critcise Dahl for his inability adequately to differentiate between a 'key' and a 'routine' political decision. It can be argued that one of the major failings of the empirical pluralist studies of community power is their arbitrary selection of issues for consideration. Most pluralists (e.g. Polsby 1963) recognise that there are both 'key' and 'routine' or 'unimportant' political decisions. However, they are less clear on how the researcher is to recognise which decisions are 'key' decisions. Dahl suggests that it is:

"...A necessary, although possibly not a sufficient condition, that the (key) issue should involve actual disagreement in preferences among two or more groups". (1958: 467)

However, the simple existence of conflict fails to distinguish between 'important' and unimportant issues. Bachrach and Baratz offer a solution to this problem. They suggest that:

"The distinction between important and unimportant issues, we believe, cannot be made intelligently in the absence of an analysis of the 'mobilisation of bias' in the community; of the dominant values and the political myths, rituals, and institutions which tend to favour the vested interests of one or more groups, relative to others".(1962:950)

Thus they identify an 'important' issue as one which challenges the dominant values and the existing 'rules of the game', while recognising that this results in an increase in subjectivity of the analysis. They also generally criticise the pluralists for having:

"... Begun by studying the issues rather than the values and biases that are built into the political system and that, for the student of power, give real meaning to those issues which do enter the political arena". (1962: 950)

To summarise; Bachrach and Baratz draw attention to two central concepts previously ignored by theories of power. These are the 'mobilisation of bias' and 'non-decision-making'. Thus, they argue that power has two separate faces: one concerned with observable decision-making, and the other with the subtle processes of non-decision-making. These are the overt and the 'covert' faces of power respectively.

In a later paper Bachrach and Baratz further refine their concept of power. They offer another definition which states:

"A power relationship exists when (a) there is a conflict over values or course of action between A and B; (b) B complies with A's wishes; and (c) he does so because he is fearful that A will deprive him of a value or values which he, B, regards more highly than those which would have been achieved by non-compliance". (1963: 635)

From this definition we can suggest that Bachrach and Baratz believe that for power to exist there must be conflict between the parties, although such conflict does not have to be overt.

Bachrach and Baratz also construct a typology of power. Their typology consists of the following concepts: power, influence, authority, force and manipulation. However, Lukes (1974) has pointed to an inconsistency in their analysis concerning their use of the term power. On one level in their analysis, power appears to refer to all forms of successful control by A over B. Yet, as part of their typology they use power to refer to the gaining of compliance by the threat of sanctions. Lukes suggests that this second use of the term could equally well be rendered use of the term 'coercion'. Thus, their typology of power would now read; coercion, influence, authority, force and manipulation. How do Bachrach and Baratz define these terms? Coercion exists where A secures B's compliance by threat of deprivation or sanction. Influence occurs when A causes B to change his course of action, without recourse to either an overt or covert threat of deprivation or sanction. If A has authority over B, then B complies because he recognises that A's command is reasonable either because its content is legitimate, or because it has been arrived at through a legitimate and correct procedure. Force occurs when A achieves his objectives by depriving B of the 'choice' between compliance and non-compliance. Finally, manipulation is seen as a sub-set of force, since in this case:

"Compliance is forthcoming in the absence of recognition on the complier's point either of the source or the exact nature of the demand upon him". (1970: 28)

Finally, Bachrach and Baratz provide definitions of the central concepts of decision-making and non-decision-making. The former is:

"... A choice among alternative modes of action". (1970: 39)

A non-decision is:

"... A decision that results in suppression or thwarting of a latent or manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision-maker". (1970: 44)

Thus non-decision making is:

"... A means by which demands for change in the existing allocation of benefits and privileges in the community can be suffocated before they are even voiced; or kept covert; or killed before they gain access to the relevant decision-making area; or, failing all these things, maimed or destroyed in the decision-implementing stage of the policy process". (1970: 44)

Previous reviewers of the work of Bachrach and Baratz have not always been in total agreement as to their interpretation of the main tenets of their position. One can contract the ways in which Lukes (1974) and Ball (1976) have interpreted their work on power. Ball, quoting an example from Bachrach and Baratz (1962), suggests that they imply that power does not have to be accompanied by conflict. However, Lukes takes the opposite interpretation and quotes (1974: 19) a passage from Bachrach and Baratz which suggests that if:

"... There is no conflict, overt or covert, the presumption must be that there is consensus on the prevailing allocation of values, in which case non-decision-making is impossible". (1970: 49)

These differing views on the relationship of power and conflict in the work of Bachrach and Baratz can be explained if one examines the way in which Ball and Lukes 'read' Bachrach and Baratz in relation to causation. Ball argues that while:

"Pluralists hold that only events can be causes' non-decision theorists, by contrast, are willing to admit non-'events' to causal status". (1976: 198)

Thus, he proceeds to suggest that certain 'non'-events such as 'reasons' or 'beliefs' about others' actions can be causes. If this is correct, and Clegg (1979) insists that it is not, then power can exist without the presence of conflict. Lukes, on the other hand, seems to imply that only 'events' can be causes but that the process of non-decision-making is to count as an event.

These differing interpretations have led to differing attempts to locate Bachrach and Baratz in the tradition of power theorising. Ball sees their work as the re-emergence of the 'stratificationist' or 'elitist' view and classifies their notion of power as a 'sophisticated elitism'. Lukes argues that in terms of their epistemological and methodological position they are actually closer to the pluralists. Thus he suggests that:

"The central thrust of Bachrach and Baratz's critique of the plural' ists' one-dimensional view of power is, up to a point, anti-behaviour- al; ... On the other hand, they do insist ... that their so-called non-decisions which confine the scope of decision-making are themselves (observable) decisions). (1974: 18)

Thus Lukes continues to see what he terms the 'two-dimensional' approach of Bachrach and Baratz as essentially behavioural.

Despite the above differences, both are convinced that the work of Bachrach and Baratz represents an improvement upon the uni-dimensional concept of power used by Dahl. Both Ball and Lukes also agree that

the correct 'level' of the Community Power Debate and its continuation in the dialogue between Dahl and Bachrach and Baratz, is at the level of 'concepts' and epistemology, rather than empirical disputes and research methodology.

1.7 The three dimensional view

Steven Lukes (1974) developed his concept of power in the course of a critique of the pluralist view of Dahl and the subsequent criticism of that approach by Bachrach and Baratz. We can begin our examination of Luke's notion of power with his critique of Bachrach and Baratz.

While the two-dimensional view of power developed by Bachrach and Baratz is undoubtedly an improvement on the one-dimensional view of the earlier pluralists, Lukes suggests that it is still inadequate for three specific reasons. Firstly, he argues that it is still basically a behaviourist theory, focusing upon the study of actual 'overt' behaviour. This behaviour is exhibited in the process of decision-making over issues which are contested by the parties. Thus Lukes argues that:

"In trying to assimilate all cases of exclusion of potential issues from the political agenda to the paradigm of a decision, it gives a misleading picture of the ways in which individuals and, above all, groups and institutions succeed in excluding potential issues from the political process". (1974: 21)

This occurs because Bachrach and Baratz follow the 'pluralists' and Weber in adopting too methodologically individualist a view of power. Lukes on the contrary argues that:

"The power to control the agenda of politics and exclude potential issues cannot be adequately analysed unless it is seen as a function of collective forces and social arrangements". (1974: 22)

Secondly, Lukes argues that the two dimensional model is inadequate because it equates power with actual observable conflict. Thus Bachrach and Baratz have failed to shake off the criticisms of pluralists such as Dahl. Both follow Weber and his stress upon the realisation of one's will, 'despite the resistance of others'. However, Lukes demonstrates that this insistance on the existence of conflict will not do for two reasons. Firstly, even according to Bachrach and Baratz's own typology, two of the forms of power, namely manipulation and authority, may not involve such conflict. Secondly, as Lukes remarks:

"To put the matter sharply, A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants". (1974: 23)

Thus Lukes suggests that, contrary to Bachrach and Baratz and the pluralists, the most insidious use of power is to prevent conflict from arising at all.

The third reason that the two dimensional view is inadequate is related to the previous one. Bachrach and Baratz argue that non-decision making power only exists where there are grievances which are denied entry into the political process in the form of issues. Thus if there are no grievances which the observer can find, then a 'genuine' consensus on values must be presumed to exist.

However this is inadequate because as Lukes suggests:

"To assume that the absence of grievance equals genuine consensus is simply to rule out the possibility of false or manipulated consensus by definitional fiat". (1974: 24)

Thus Lukes is pointing out, surely correctly, that the supreme form of power is the ability to shape and mould people's values in such a manner that they accept the status quo because they see it as beneficial, unchangeable or the 'natural order'.

Lukes summarises his three-dimensional approach as follows:

"... The three-dimensional view of power involves a thoroughgoing critique of the behavioural focus of the first two views as too individualistic and allows for consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics, whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individuals decisions. This, moreover, can occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted though there remains here an implicit reference to potential conflict. This potential, however, is never in fact actualised. What one may have here is a latent conflict, which consists in a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude". (1974: 24-5)

It is important to examine this three-dimensional notion of power in some detail. In attempting to the articulate the basic concepts that underlie the notion of power, Lukes makes several interesting and controversial points. Firstly he suggests that power "is one of those concepts which is ineradicably value-dependent". (1974: 26)

Thus the concept of "power is, in consequence, what has been called an 'essentially contested concept'". (1974: 26). Secondly, he argues that the concept of power basically involves a notion of some form of primitive causal 'affecting' of another actor and must also involve some notion of significance. Thus, for Lukes, power can be reconceptualised as a form of 'significant affecting'. We will return to these premises and some of the controversy surrounding them in a short while, but we firstly need to examine the typology of power that Lukes produces after his initial 'ground-clearing' exercise. The typology is shown in Figure 1.3.

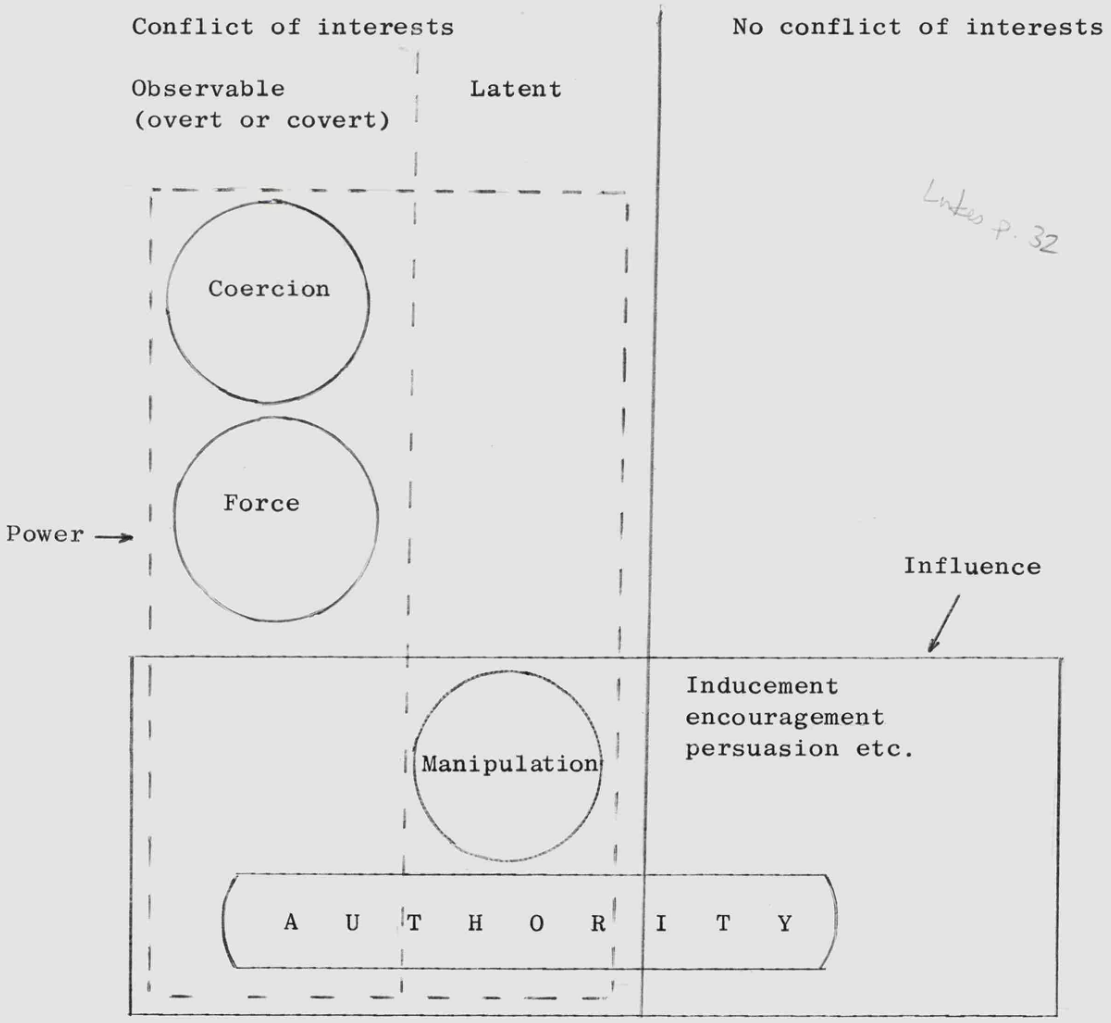


Figure 1.3 The typology of Lukes

In this typology Lukes attempts to locate all forms of 'significant affecting' on a couple of major dimensions. Thus, power may or may not be a form of influence, depending upon whether sanctions are involved or not. Authority and influence both may or may not be forms of power depending upon whether a conflict of interests is involved or not. Consensually, legitimated authority in the Parsonian sense is not therefore to be classed as power. We will compare this typology with others later in this chapter.

Lukes defines his concept of power "by saying that A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests". (1974: 34). He then argues that the notion of interests is an irreducibly evaluative notion and that conceptions of interests vary with different moral and political positions. The ways in which interests are related to different moral and political positions and different notions of power is presented in the figure below.

Figure 1.4 A comparison of the one, two and three dimensional views of power

View of Power	Moral and Political Position	Conception of Interests
One dimensional	Liberal	Interests are related to what people actually want/ prefer. These wants/preferances are seen as being manifested in the decision making process.
Two dimensional	Reformist	Suggests (deploringly) that not all people's wants are given equal weight in the decision-making process. Thus while interests equate with actual wants/preferances, these may be submerged, deflected,

Continued...

View of Power	Moral and Political Position	Conception of Interests
Two dimensional	Reformist	diverted or suppressed in the decision making process
Three dimensional	Radical	Wants/preferences may be created/shaped by the system in a way that is contrary to the actors 'real' interests. Thus, interests equal what people would want/prefer, if they were able to make a free choice

The main advantage claimed by Lukes for the three-dimensional view of power is that it enables an exploration of how demands are suppressed or even prevented from arising in the decision-making process. As Lukes puts it, the three-dimensional view:

"Offers, in other words, the prospect of a serious sociological and not merely personalised exploration of how political systems prevent demands from becoming political issues or even from being made". (1974: 38)

Lukes also identifies one area of possible difficulty with his approach. In order to do so, he introduces the notions of the 'effective' and 'operative' exercise of power. The former occurs when A by doing something actually gets B to do what B would not otherwise have done. Thus the intervention of A (which could, of course, involve non-decisions) can be said to have made a difference to the result. The operative exercise of power refers to a situation where A's action is by itself sufficient to have produced a different result in terms of B's behaviour, but in this situation has not necessarily caused the actual result.

This covers the case of 'over-determination', where two actors A and C both simultaneously act in order to produce certain behaviour from B. It is impossible to say which one actually caused the change in result but they both 'exercised' power in the 'operative' manner.

Both forms of the exercise of power involve what Lukes has termed "a relevant counterfactual". (1974: 41). This refers to the fact that but for A, or but for A together with any other sufficient conditions, B would otherwise have done something else. Where there is conflict between A and B, then 'the relevant counterfactual' is ready-made. Consider the case when B desires to do Y but A would prefer that B did X. If A has power over B, he may be able to prevail over B and make B do X. In this case, if it had not been for A's power, then B would obviously have done something else (i.e. Y).

However, if there is no observable conflict between the parties, then the task of identifying the relevant counterfactual becomes more difficult. As Lukes argues:

"Where there is no observable conflict between A and B, then we must provide other grounds for asserting the relevant counterfactual. That is, we must provide other, indirect, grounds for asserting that if A had not acted (or failed to act) in a certain way - and, in the case of operative power, if other sufficient conditions had not been operative - then B would have thought and acted differently from the way he does actually think and act". (1974: 41)

Thus the two major difficulties of the three-dimensional approach are, firstly, to justify the relevant counterfactual and, secondly, to identify the mechanism of transmission related to the alleged

exercise of power.

Having fully described Lukes' three-dimensional view of power, it is now possible to examine some of the critiques that have been made of it. This is of central importance because of certain similarities between Lukes' conception of power and my own, and secondly because the criticisms raise topics and problems which will be considered later in this work. It is proposed to use the critique of Lukes to illustrate areas of confusion and difficulty but to avoid the complicated retelling of academic debates and detailed criticism.

Central to the three-dimensional view of power is the notion of 'real interests' and Lukes has argued that "the indentification of those interests ultimately rests on empirically supportable and refutable hypotheses". (1974:25). Later in his book, he takes a slightly different line and suggests that:

"The identification of these is not up to A, but to B, exercising choice under conditions of relative autonomy and, in particular, independently of A's power - e.g. through democratic participation". (1974: 33)

Bradshaw (1976) has taken issue on this point, suggesting that while such a procedure "will lead to the crystallization of different preferences, but not necessarily to the revelation of 'real interests'". (1976: 121) The first problem with Lukes' notion is what constitutes 'relative autonomy'. Bradshaw doubts both whether the removal of the power subject will equate with the removal of <u>all</u> sources of power over the power object and whether a situation of total autonomy and freedom from structural constraints is possible.

Thus, Bradshaw does not believe that Lukes' notion of real interests is operational on his own definition. He argues that Lukes avoids this problem by accepting an observer's assessment of real interests. Bradshaw further suggests that Lukes' problem stems from his use of an essentially Marxist notion (which can be justified within that theoretical and ideological framework) in a non-Marxist manner. In essence, then, this problem seems to be one of epistemology. The two authors are not debating the 'existence' of 'real interests', but only the grounds upon which they can be identified and operationalised.

The second main area of criticism concerns Lukes' individualist conception of power and his inability to embrace a truly structural view of power. This problem surfaces in various ways. Bradshaw criticises Lukes for his use of the restricted illustrative methodology of A and B mind experiments derived from Dahl, Bachrach and Baratz and others. The result of this is that:

"There can be no proper examination of group workings, either in terms of the individual executive's power or in terms of the growth of organisational effects and biases. Lukes has to leap straight from diadic illustrations to assertions about collective exercises of power mediated through the various forms of group decision-making, institutional effects, or 'mobilization of bias'". (1976: 123)

Lukes very clearly rejects the individualist behaviour analyses of Dahl and of Bachrach and Baratz, arguing that power is a property of social forces and collectivities. Indeed Lukes states that:

"Bachrach and Baratz follow the pluralists in adopting too methodologically individualist a view of power.

In this both parties follow in the steps of Max Weber, for who power was the probability of individuals realising their wills despite the resistance of others, whereas the power to control the agenda of politics and exclude potential issues cannot be adequately analysed unless it is seen as a function of collective forces and social arrangements". (1974: 22)

Yet in the final chapter of his book, where he reviews the debate between Poulantzas (1969, 1973) and Miliband (1969, 1970, 1973), Lukes appears to retract and retreat from his earlier position. Bradshaw states that:

"In the final pages of his essay Lukes denies the validity of a structural or social forces definition of power, returning instead to the individualist conception that he earlier rejected in the writings of the pluralist and non-decision theorists". (1976: 125)

Clegg (1979) identifies the same retreat from a structural notion of power in Lukes' description of Crenson's (1971) work on the power of U.S. Steel in Gary, Indiana. Lukes appears to reduce U.S. Steel's power to individual citizens and civil leaders and to widespread beliefs (See Clegg 1979: 57-58). Rather than adopt this individualistic reputational methodology, Clegg suggests that:

"Lukes might instead have been concerned to argue how the possibility of any such beliefs, or actions, could be structurally feasible. This would imply analysis of hegemony and a mode of production, rather than agents beliefs". (1979: 58)

Thus, despite his arguments, Lukes appears to have lapsed into viewing power in an individualist relational manner and thus fails to locate

the concept in the context of a wider theoretical framework which deals with the operation of society as a whole.

The third area of criticism concerns the notion of power as 'value dependent' and Lukes' characterisation of the three-dimensional view of power as 'radical'. Hindess (1976) argues that it is possible to construct any concept (such as boredom) and then to identify one, two and three-dimensional views of it, without its being necessary to consider the three-dimensional view as 'radical' in any sense. However, Hindess may be said to be missing the point. While the identification of a three-dimensional notion of power is not 'radical' by itself, what is 'radical', given a Marxist theoretical framework, is the implications of such an understanding of power, if this were to be transmitted to the subordinated class. Lukes is therefore justified in using the term 'radical' as he has argued that views of power are value-dependent. This however, despite his claim to the contrary, leaves him in a position where he is really unable to argue that his view of power is superior to all others. If he adopts a relativist epistemology, then this is not a great problem. Thus, it appears to be Hindess's rejection of the relativistic thesis which leads him to reject the notion of a 'radical' three-dimensional view of power.

In summary, we can say that the main contribution of Lukes' work lies in the identification of a system of domination as a form of power in which a false consensus is created by the manipulation of values and attitudes, resulting in a 'false' consciousness. However, the major deficiency of his approach is that it does not satisfactorily delineate the different forms of power or, more importantly, locate them in a coherent framework which would explain the exercise of

power on all levels within a given system (for example, the workplace). Thus Lukes does not explain how the consensus is created or what methods are used in order to maintain it. These are some of the questions that any alternative model of power would usefully set out to answer.

1.8 A typology of power

Some writers, rather than attempt a comprehensive theory of power, have instead decided to produce typologies of all the forms and manifestations of power and other associated concepts. We can examine the work of Hamilton (1976, 1977) as an example of this form of analysis.

Hamilton's work consists of an analysis of social power, a definition and a typology. He initially considers the ways in which the term power has been used by means of a critique of the major schools and critical issues. From this critique emerges his own definition of power and an extremely comprehensive typology.

Following other writers, Hamilton identifies two differing views of power. The first view equates power with the use of force or negative sanctions. The second is a wider view which sees power as any type of interaction in which one party causes some action or change in the behaviour of another party. As we shall see Hamilton prefers a qualified version of the latter view of power. He criticises the former as being too restrictive and cites the exchange theory of power (Blau) which equates power with negative sanctions as an example.

Hamilton also steers a middle course in regard to another debate concerning power and conflict. He rejects the view that for power to exist there must be a conflict of interests but is concerned to avoid

the opposite Parsonian view that power relationships are characterised by consensus and legitimation.

Hamilton takes issue with Lukes (1974) over his three-dimensional view of power. He presents Lukes' argument as being that power can exist when one party refuses to co-operate with another party and so prevents that party from achieving its objectives. However, it can be argued that this is not an accurate or fair resume of Lukes' position. Hamilton proceeds to argue that the three-dimensional view should not count as an instance of power at all. He argues that:

"It has to be excluded because if one person exercises power over another merely by not co-operating with the other, then it has to be admitted that we all exercise power over one another most of the time ... The list of things an individual or organisation is reluctant to do is endless because it includes everything that it would conceivably do minus only what it is actually willing to do. And it is not the case that such refusals don't prevent others doing what they would have otherwise done. It is certain that people will encroach upon time, skills and resources almost without limit. That they don't actually attempt to do so is because they know the attempt will in most cases be futile". (1976: 301)

However, this does not appear to be a satisfactory critique of the three-dimensional view. If the three-dimensional view simply referred to non co-operation then Hamilton would probably be correct. However, it is much wider than that. It refers to a situation where B has objectives which are blocked by A who would prefer B's objectives not to be realised.

In order to do this A uses all his resources to ensure that B's objective is not on the agenda for decision making. Secondly, Hamilton appears to assume that all issues are equal in importance whereas, in fact, some issues are unimportant while others are crucial to the parties concerned.

Hamilton proceeds to address some of the crucial questions regarding power that confront anyone who tries to define the concept or construct a typology. Firstly, on the question of non-behavioural effects he sides with Dahl. Thus he argues that power can only be said to exist if A, by whatever means, gets B to do something that he was not doing or would not have done. Thus, if A fails to get B to change his behaviour in some way, then the attempt to exercise power has failed. Therefore, Hamilton adopts a behaviouralist conception or power. Secondly, Hamilton suggests that the term power should be restricted to situations of 'intention'. That is where A 'intends' to alter the behaviour of B. Hamilton accepts that there are situations concerned with unintended effects but suggests that these can be covered by the term 'influence'. Finally, Hamilton addresses the vexed question of 'potentiality' and identifies two views. Firstly, the notion of 'potential power' which derives from a concept of power as an individualistic capacity. Secondly, the notion of 'actual power' which arises from the conception of power as a relationship. Hamilton proposes to restrict the use of the term power to those situations where A regularly alters B's behaviour. Thus, he does not recognise 'potential' power and argues that,

"... power does not exist independently of its use or exercise". (1976: 306)

However, he does recognise that the other situations, while not instances of pure power, can still exist. Thus he suggests that:

"When cases are referred to in which A could exercise or have power over B if he chose to do so, the term 'possible power' will be used. When cases are referred to in which A's actions would have caused B's compliance, had he intended not to comply, the term 'latent power' will be used. When cases are referred to in which A can exercise or have power over B when circumstances arise in which he desires or requires the compliance of B, and this includes cases where A might demand this compliance in virtue of some office he holds, the term 'potential power' will be used. (1976: 306)

Hamilton then produces his first definition of power which will form the basis of this typology. His definition argues that:

"A is said to have or to exercise power over B or in relation to B whenever he gets B to comply with his intentions, when B would not otherwise have done so, either because of some action of A prior to B's response, or in anticipation of A's response, and for whatever reason". (1976: 306)

Unlike some other theorists (e.g. Dahl 1960) who use 'power bases' as the foundation of a typology, Hamilton instead uses 'motive bases'. Thus, his classification is not founded upon the type of power resource available to the exercise of power, but is instead founded upon the motives that actors have for compliance. Hamilton's typology of social power is illustrated in Figure 1.5. The concept of social power is taken and sub-divided until eleven forms of power emerge.

Social power can, suggests Hamilton, be split into environmental and interactive components. Environmental power occurs when A manipulates the environment of B or alters B's perception of this environment. In such situations it is not necessary for B to be aware of A's intentions. Interactive power involves cases where there exists direct communication or interaction between the parties. In cases of interactive power B complies because of his perception (accurate or not) or the intentions of A.

Interactive power has two possible forms; exchange power and direct power. In exchange power the action of B is conditional on some course of action being followed by A. Thus exchange power is to a certain extent indirect in that the compliance of the other is contingent upon some action on the part of the exerciser of power. Direct power, on the other hand, occurs in situations where the compliance of B does not depend in any way upon the action on the part of A. Thus in direct power, A exercises power over B simply by making his wishes known directly.

Direct power can be subdivided again into its 'directive' and 'regulative' components. Directive power refers to cases where B evaluates A's directive as being a good reason for acting in the desired way or as being congruent with his own goals. Regulative power covers situations where B complies without such considerations. Regulative power can be further sub-divided into 'normative' and 'personal' forms. Normative power is vested in individuals because they hold certain positions, or because they traditionally have held such power. Personal power is held by individuals by virtue of their personal characteristics or personalities.

It is now possible to consider the eleven final forms of power.

1. Physical Constraint/Enablement

This involves manipulating the environment in such a way, that the behaviour of the other party is physically prevented if that behaviour is not desired. Conversely, the behaviour may be made physically possible or less difficult where the behaviour is desired.

2. Situational Power

This occurs where the environment, or someone's perception of it, is altered in such a way, that they behave differently, purely as a result of their own decision.

3. Instrumental Power

This means that one party simply demands directly the compliance of the other and this is forthcoming because the directive is assessed as being in the other party's own interests. Thus, instrumental power occurs where the compliance of the other group is due to the belief, rightly or wrongly held, that what is required of them is in their own interests. This category also covers the case of 'expert power' where compliance occurs because it is thought that the party exercising power has additional knowledge or skills and is therefore 'correct'.

4. Prescriptive/Proscriptive Power

Where one group changes the behaviour of another group by convincing them that it is in accordance with certain values or norms that they already hold, or convincing them of the worth of other values which they ought to hold, then this can be called Prescriptive/Proscriptive power. Thus this is a form of moral power.

5. Authority

Unlike other theorists (e.g. Weber), Hamilton includes authority as a form of power and not as a separate but related concept. He uses it, however in the classic Weberian formulation.

6. Habitual Power

This refers to the case where power is derived from the habitual compliance of one actor to another actor who in the past has always been able to exercise power of one type or another. This is similar to Weber's concept of traditional authority.

7. Exemplary Power

This refers to the ability to set an example for others to follow by taking a certain course of action.

8. Referant Power

Where one actor's compliance is due to personal regard or admiration for another actor, then this can be seen as an example of referant power. This is similar to Weber's notion of charismatic authority.

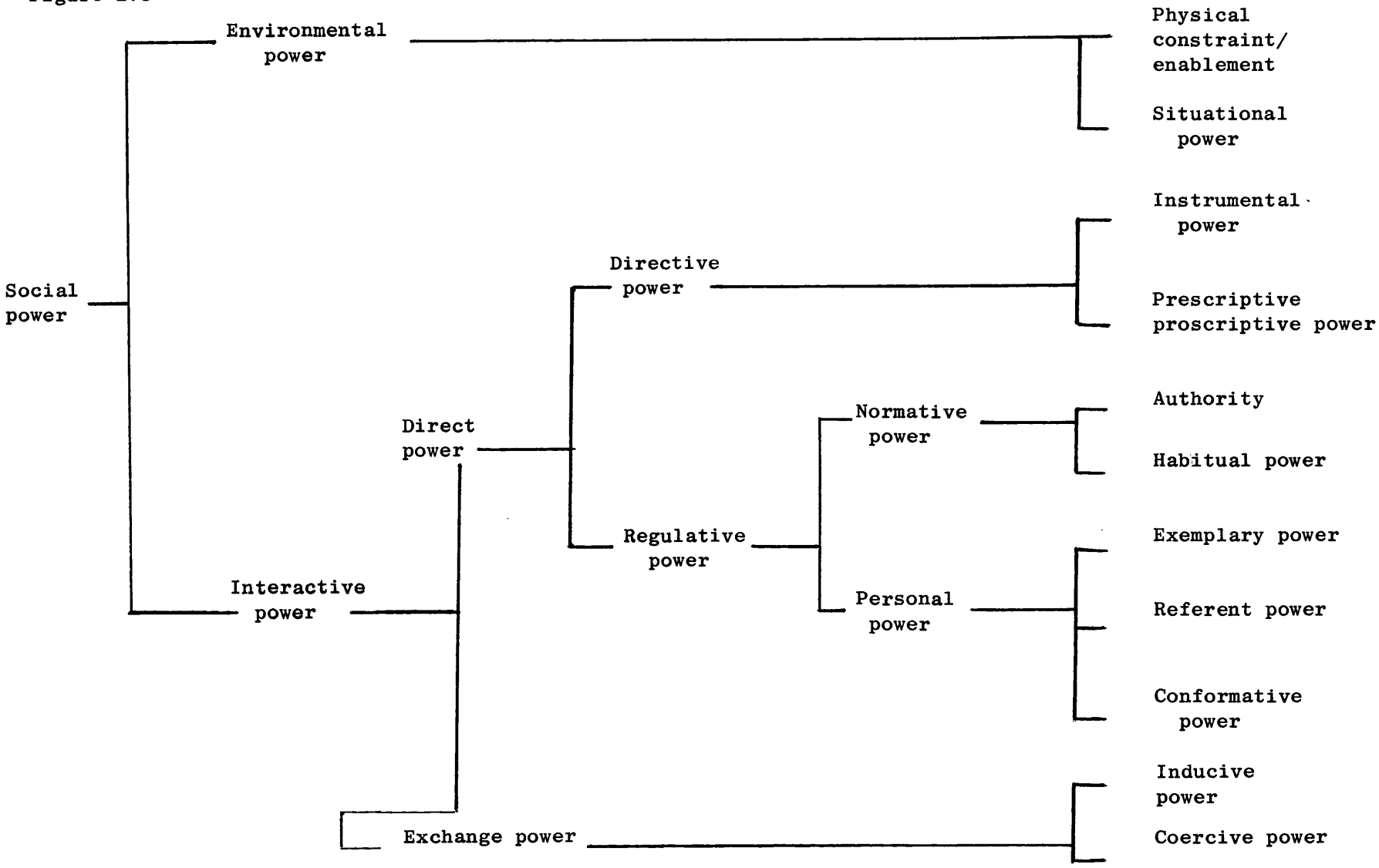
9. Conformative Power

This refers to all cases where one actor complies with the wishes of another actor in order not to draw his disapproval or in order to elicit his approval. As this is a one way spontaneous interaction it cannot be a form of exchange power. The most important form of this power:

"... is that held jointly by a group. Most individuals find the strong disapproval of their group as a whole a most uncomfortable penalty and, on the other hand, their approval one of the most satisfying of rewards. Conformative power in the hands of a group is thus a very effective means of social control". (1977: 63)

A typology of social power - Hamilton (1977)

Figure 1.5



10. Inducive Power

This form of power is based upon the interaction of two parties and is indirect. This means that compliance is contingent upon some action on behalf of the party possessing the power. Inducive power occurs where A acts in a way desirable to B in return for a reciprocal action, or gives something to B in exchange for a desired action or object.

11. Coercive Power

This occurs where one party 'threatens' to act in a certain way in an attempt to 'coerce' the other party into compliance.

1.9 An alternative typology

In his recent book on power, Wrong (1979) develops a typology which he uses to inform his discussion of the concept. This typology is shown in diagrammatic form in Figure 1.6.

Wrong begins with the concept of influence. Like Hamilton, he sees this as a weaker form of power. Where influence is intended then it is a form of power. However, situations where influence is unintended cannot be counted as cases of power. Wrong then identifies four major forms of power.

Firstly, there is the situation where A 'forces' B to do something he would not otherwise have done. A can use either violent or non-violent physical techniques or psychic pressures in order to ensure compliance with his wishes. Secondly, there is the case where A conceals from B the intended effect that he wishes to produce. This Wrong calls manipulation.

Figure 1.6 A typology of power - Wrong (1979)

Wrong (1979: 24)

As Easton puts it,

"When B is not aware of A's intention to influence him but A does in fact manage to get B to follow his wishes, we can say that we have an instance of manipulation". (1958: 179)

Thirdly where,

"A presents arguments, appeals or exhortations to B, and B, after independently evaluating their content in light of his own values and goals, accepts A's communication as the basis of his own behaviour, A has successfully persuaded B". (1979: 32)

Thus, the third form of power analysed by Wrong is persuasion. Finally Wrong, like Hamilton argues that authority is a special case of power, although Wrong's conception of authority is wider than Hamilton's.

Wrong splits the concept of authority into five component parts. Coercive authority occurs where A has convinced B of his capability and willingness to carry out his threat of force as a penalty for non-compliance. A may convince B by making explicit and displaying the means of force that he possesses or controls. Induced authority refers to the offering of position sanctions (i.e. rewards), rather than the use of negative sanctions, to ensure compliance with a directive. Legitimate authority refers to the classic Weberian concept of rational-legal authority. Hence,

"the source rather than the content of any particular command endows it with legitimacy and induces willing compliance on the part of the person to whom it is addressed". (1979: 49)

Competent authority occurs when B obeys A's directives because of a

belief in A's superior competence or expertise and ability to decide which actions will be in B's best interests. Finally, personal authority covers situations where B obeys because of a desire to please A or because of A's personal qualities. Thus for Wrong charismatic authority is a sub-set of personal authority.

It is possible to compare the typologies of Hamilton and Wrong. Such a comparison is shown in Figure 1.7.

Figure 1.7 A comparison of the typologies of Hamilton and Wrong

Hamilton (1976/1977)	Wrong (1979)
Physical Constraint/Enablement	Force or coercive authority
Situational power	Manipulation
Instrumental power	Competent authority or persuasion
Prescriptive/Proscriptive Power	Persuasion
Authority	Legitimate authority
Habitual power	- - -
Exemplary power	Personal authority
Referent power	Personal authority
Conformative power	Personal authority
Inducive power	Induced authority
Coercive power	Force or coercive authority

It can be seen from the Table that the two typologies have many points of similarity. The only major difference is that Wrong does not appear to have a category to match Hamilton's notion of habitual power. However, following Weber, this could be rendered by the use of traditional authority which would fit easily into his scheme.

The utility of such typologies as those by Hamilton and Wrong is that they focus attention upon the fact that power can occur in many different forms. The major criticism of such typologies, whether they are based upon the possession of 'power resources' or based upon the 'reasons for compliance', is the same. They enable us to examine a specific occurrence of power and suggest that A had power over B either because of some 'power resources' possessed by A or because B chose to comply with A's wishes/demands for certain reasons. Such typologies, however, do not enable us to develop a general theory of power. The typologies which use 'power resources' appear to assume that the specific 'resources' which had a utility in one situation will have that utility in all situations. This assumption is, of course, not warranted. These typologies of power are content to explain the 'exercise' of power in terms of a differential distribution of 'power resources', yet they do not attempt to show how this situation orginated. As Clegg and Dunkerley have argued,

"The assumption of 'resource'-based explanations of 'power' ought also to entail an exposition of how come people come to have access to these 'resources' while some others do not". (1980: 436)

1.10 A structural view of power

As with previous authors, Martin, (1977) attempts to locate his definition of power within the tradition of power theorising as a preface to the construction of a typology. Martin thus locates and criticises the Weberian and Parsonian schools of power. The Weberian view is subjected to three criticisms. Firstly, Martin suggests that it assumes a conflict of interests between the parties. Secondly, it

"transposes a property of interactions, of interrelations, into a property of actors". (1977: 37)

This leads to the third problem which is that the Weberian view tends to see power as a generalised capacity, rather than the observable attributes of a specific relationship. However, Martin is also critical of the view of power expressed by Parsons. As he argues (following Giddens 1968)

"... the new Parsonian definition creates more problems than it resolved, for Parsons places consensus where Weber placed conflict. Parsons defines out of existence the problems which have usually preoccupied sociologists of power". (1977: 38)

What, then, is the solution to this theoretical dilemma? Martin, rejecting Dahl's 'intuitive conception', draws upon the systems notion of communication flow and constructs a new (and rather inelegant) definition. He suggests that,

"In these modified cybernetic terms, therefore, power may be defined strictly, at the most general level, as that type of information flow which symbolises non-self-regarding action for the recipient". (1977: 39)

In this definition he is attempting to stress two major points. Firstly, that power is a specific type of information flow and thus the property of a relationship. Secondly, by the term "non-self-regarding action", Martin appears to be referring to action by an individual in which his costs exceed his benefits.

To the extent that he is prepared to act in this way, despite the disadvantageous cost/benefit balance, then we can assume that he is subject to the power of another individual or group. If, on the other hand, the individual's benefits exceeded his costs, then there would not be any power relationship.

Martin argues that his definition has considerable advantages over the standard definitions of power. As has already been shown, it demonstrates that power is the property of a relationship and is a specific mode of communication. Secondly, the power 'signals' only have meaning in terms of the perceptions of the actors in the situation, and especially in terms of the perception or frame of reference, of the subordinate actor in the relationship.

Despite its advantages, Martin acknowledges that there is at least one possible major criticism of his definition. This concerns situations where subordinates fail to realise that their actions are non-self-regarding, although judged to be so by external observers. In terms of his definition this is not a case of power. Yet others such as Lukes (1974) have argued that this situation is a very important form of power. In his three dimensional view of power Lukes specifically argues that power can exist in situations where subordinates are unaware of the fact that power is being exercised over them. Thus subordinates may be socialised into accepting a false consciousness of their own interests and may therefore adopt a position or action contrary to their own true interests. This has been succinctly expressed by Lukes as follows,

"I have defined the concept of power by saying that A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests". (1974: 34)

Here Lukes defines interests as what men would want (between alternatives) if they were given the choice, and not what they actually do want. This view is supported, either directly or indirectly, by a number of theorists including Westergaard (1974), and Fox (1973).

Martin responds to this possible critique by making several points. Firstly, the reasons for the compliance of a subordinate lie in his own motive bases and consciousness, and not in that of any observer. Secondly, there exists no objective criterion for deciding whose definition of 'real' interests is correct and finally there exists no "adequate theory specifying the processes whereby the actor acquires false consciousness" (1977: 40). This discussion will be further amplified in a later chapter.

Before constructing his model of power Martin finds it necessary to define some related concepts; these are compliances, coercion, authority and influence. Rejecting the standard definition from Etzioni (1975) which refers to the act of compliance and to the orientation of the subordinate actor, Martin argues that,

"Compliance refers to the attitudes and behaviour caused, by power, or, more formally, to the 'non-self-regarding' actions performed at the behest (direct or indirect) of others". (1977: 41)

With regard to coercion Martin decides to adopt Etzioni's definition. Thus coercion is defined as,

"the application, or the threat of application of physical sanctions such as the infliction of pain, deformity, or death; generation of frustration through restriction of movement; or controlling through force the satisfaction of such needs as those for food, sex, comfort and the like". (1975: 5)

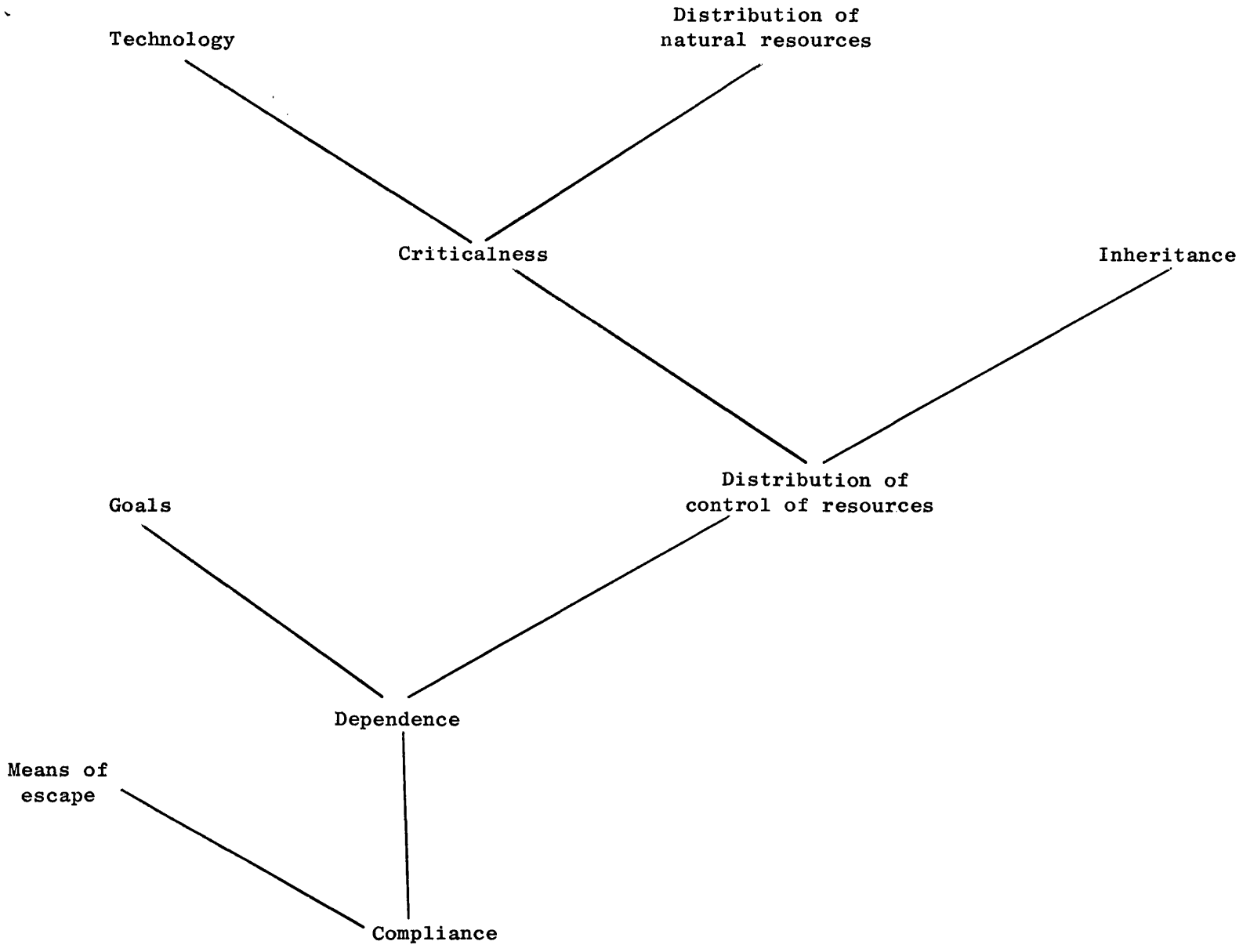
In relation to the concept of authority Martin seeks to stress the notion of legitimacy and quotes the classic Weberian discussion of the concept. Finally, he defines influence, which he sees as the situation where compliance results,

"... from a fear of the consequences of non-compliance, even where the deprivations likely to follow are not physical, or where the relationship is not legitimised". (1977: 42)

Martin, in his model of power relations, focuses both upon actor's goals and the distribution of resources, unlike both Hamilton and Wrong, who concentrate upon the subordinates reasons for compliance. His model of power relations can be seen in Figure 1.8. This model starts with compliance and works backward through the factors which are involved in determining the amount of compliance (and thus power) in any given relationship. It is useful in explaining this model to quote at length from Martin,

"Assymetric patterns of dependence, and thus the need for compliance, results from differential control over access to the resources required to achieve these goals. This differential control is based partly upon the degree of 'criticalness' of specific attributes or resources at specific times, and partly upon ancestral inheritance .....

Figure 1.8 A model of power relations - Martin (1977)



"Criticalness is a function of centrality and scarcity, and differs according to the prevailing forces of production and availability of natural resources. In summary terms: technology and natural resources determine criticalness; criticalness and inheritance lead to differential control over resources; differential control over resources leads to dependence where resources are desired; imbalanced dependence and limited possibilities for escape lead to compliance". (1977: 50)

It can be clearly seen that Martin's model is completely different from the simple typologies of Hamilton and Wrong. It is a macro-level discussion of the variables that determine the compliance of groups in different systems of labour exploitation and poltical economy.

The variables in the model can now be specified in more detail. Technology refers to:

"the physical actions involved in treating and manipulating raw materials, the organisation of the labour force thus employed, and the knowledge used in combining the two". (1977: 51)

Thus the term does not simply refer to the physical objects or tools of production. Although rejecting pure technological determinism, Martin seeks to argue that groups who benefit from the distribution of resources, resulting from a given system of technology, will try to preserve that technology. Thus, a particularly technical process 'dictates' a specific pattern of work relations and thus social relations including power relations. Martin identifies five types of technology based upon the predominant instrument of production; hunting and gathering, simple horticultural (based upon the digging stick), advanced horticultural (metal hoe), agrarian (plough, harness and more

advanced metallargy) and industrial. He then argues that,

"These five technologies will produce different characteristic distributions of control over desired resources, and thus different typical patterns of asymmetric dependence relations". (1977: 52)

'Criticalness' is composed of two elements which need to be present; these are centrality and scarcity. The centrality of a resource depends upon its nature and its utility to large sections of the population. The scarcity of a resource is a function of the distribution of that resource and the existence of any technology to exploit it. The amount of dependence in a society is largely influenced by both criticalness and inheritance. Inheritance has two main effects. Firstly, where a society permits intergenerational transmission of control of resources, then there is likely to be a greater concentration of control of resources, in comparison to those societies which do not permit such inter-generational transmission. Secondly control over resources is affected by the "partibility of inheritance". (1977: 53)

The distribution of the control of resources, taken together with the goals and desires of individuals, leads to a situation of dependence. But dependence does not lead directly to compliance. This only occurs where no escape routes are available. Following Blau (1964), Martin suggests that there are four escape strategies available to subordinates. Firstly, they can supply the superior with inducements in terms of resources he desires and which are relatively costless to the subordinate. Secondly, he may attempt to find elsewhere the resources which create his dependence.

Thirdly, he may seek to combine with other subordinates with similar dependencies, in an attempt to modify the exchange rate between dependence and compliance. Finally, the subordinate may decide that the costs of his 'non-self-regarding' actions are higher than the cost of foregoing the resources which created his dependency. Thus, he will do with the resources. Therefore dependence only leads to compliance when escape routes are unavailable or where their use would result in costs greater than those involved in the original power relationship.

Martin proceeds to specify that,

"The amount of power in any relationship is directly determined by the relevant distribution of dependence and the availability of escape routes: ceteris paribus, the greater the imbalance and the more difficult the escape, the greater the amount of non-self-regarding action required in order to obtain the resources, and therefore the greater the amount of power involved". (1977: 55)

Finally Martin argues that the amount of power influences, but does not directly determine, the basis of power. Thus, in general terms, the greater the amount of power, the greater the probability that it will rest upon authority. This relationship is, however, influenced by other factors, such as the type of compliance action required by the superior and the basis of the dependence.

It should be noted that Martin's model of power relations is of a completely different nature from the typologies of Hamilton and Wrong. They focus on motive bases for compliance and seek to list all the possible reasons for compliance. Martin uses compliance as a starting point but considers both motive and resource bases for power.

He is also more concerned with explaining how power relations differ under different social systems of labour exploitation, based upon different technologies. Thus, as Martin acknowledges, his model attempts to get away from the interpersonal level of power research and study the "social processes and structures at the macro-level". (1977: 58)

1.11 An evaluation of the literature

What then can we learn from the literature about this elusive concept of power? Searching for a model of concept of power which would assist the understanding of Industrial Relations phenomena, one is confronted, not by a single tradition and internally coherent view of power, but instead by a plethora of differing views and divergent traditions which only serve to confuse and obfuscate.

In order to 'map' the terrain of power theorising, a number of 'key' issues and debates have been extracted from the literature. Arguably, from a discussion and examination of these issues and debates,it is now possible to generate an improved understanding of the concept of power. Any theory of power,if it is to be considered successful,must of necessity confront and resolve each of these issues and debates. The following major 'issues' have been identified:

a) Intercursive or integral power?

Is power plurally distributed in society, or is it held by an elite group? This is a central issue in the power literature and one which has implications in terms of industrial relations.

This debate also subsumes some other debates, namely the conflict/consensus theories debate and the Zero Sum/Non Zero sum debate. Thus, on the one hand there are those theorists who believe that power is distributed throughout society; who argue that power is a non-zero sum concept and who believe in a basic consensus within society. On the other side are ranged those theorists who believe that power is concentrated into a few hands; who argue that power is a zero-sum concept and who believe that society is characterised by a state of conflict rather than consensus. These issues are, of course, central to the Community Power Debate but they can be extended much more widely than that. Thus on the 'Pluralist' side we can include Dahl, Polsby and other pluralists in the Community Power Debate. It may be suggested that the work of exchange theorists such as Emerson and Blau has strong affinities with the pluralist position, although at least one writer (Jessop 1969) has argued that the Exchange tradition can act as a synthesis of both conflict and consensus positions. On the 'Elitist' side are C. Wright Mills, Hunter and others in the Community Power Debate as well as Lukes and radical structuralists such as Althusser and Poulantzas. Some writers appear to steer a middle course in relation to this debate. An interesting example is the work of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) which is seen as representing the 'pluralist' tradition by Lukes (1974) but as being a 'sophisticated elitist' view by Ball (1975). This debate does not, of course, have to be seen in polarised terms. Thus it may be conceded that power is not necessarily zero-sum and that it is partially distributed throughout society. A basic societal consensus, broadly similar to what Paskin (1971) has termed the 'dominant value system', may also be said to exist. However, the distribution of power is uneven and unequal and the value consensus fragile and challenged by the

'subordinate' and 'radical' systems. Indeed, one may go further and suggest that on certain occasions and in certain areas, the value consensus may be artificially created or manipulated. This is of course in line with Lukes' three dimensional view of power. On this issue, therefore, I would tend towards the conflict/elitist side of the debate.

b) Power as potential or as exercise?

There is a great deal of disagreement as to whether power can be 'possessed' and 'stored' and thus treated as capacity or potential to exert power at some point in the future or whether power only exists at the time when it is actually exercised. Both Weber and Parsons appear to adopt the former view while Martin, while not totally equating power with its exercise, does criticise the 'generalised capacity' notion of Weber and thus seems to restrict power to instances of its use.

This issue is particularly interesting, as it shows that sometimes the theoretical positions taken by writers differ from their own methodological practices. Thus Dahl in his earlier theoretical work (Dahl 1957) appears to view power as capacity or potential but in his later empirical work (Dahl 1961) power is related to observable decision making and the ability of actors to achieve their goals. Thus power is seen as 'exercise'. Some other authors recognise that both forms of power could exist but seek to restrict what counts as an instance of power to one of views. Thus Emerson and Hamilton both acknowledge that potential power exists but argue that it is only the exercise of power that can be empirically verified and thus only such instances should count as forms of power.

While power is more easily observed when it is exercised, any definition which restricted power to instances of this sort, would be unable to handle the more subtle aspects of the power process. Thus any new model of power would have to encompass both power as exercise and as potential.

c) Observable power or non-observable power?

For a situation to count as an instance of power, does an actor within a social relationship have to 'do' anything or be seen to 'do' something? This question is obviously related to the previous issue and the protagonists are very similar. Dahl suggests that power only exists in situations where an actor 'exercises' his power in an observable way. Thus, power can be monitored and studied via the process of decision-making. Bachrach and Baratz, despite their identification of the process of 'non-decision-making' still insist that this process is itself a process of observable decision-making and thus power is still equated with observable behaviour by one of the actors in a social relationship. Ranged against these views are those theorists who argue power can occur and be present even if in simple terms, 'nothing happens'. Thus Lukes suggests that the third dimension of power covers the situation where the 'real' interests of B are thwarted by A and his ability to shape and determine the 'wants' of B. While this case of domination may not be directly observable it is certainly to count as a form of power. In a similar vein Ball has suggested that the pluralist insistance that only events can be causes is unduly restrictive. Thus any new theory of power would have to be able to handle power in both its observable and non-observable forms.

d) Behavioural versus structural conceptions of power

One division running throughout the voluminous power literature concerns the question of whether power is the property of social actors or the property of social communities and structures. This, in turn, may be seen to reflect a division in wider social theory between theories of action and theories of structure.

In the power field there is one group of theorists, which includes Weber, Dahl, Bachrach and Baratz and Hamilton who define power in terms of the capacity or probability of an actor to achieve desired goals or outcomes. On the other hand there is another group which includes such diverse talents as Parsons, Poulantzas, Martin and Clegg who suggest that power is specifically a property of social structures. Giddens has succinctly stated the two positions as follows;

"There are effectively two versions of how power structures are constituted, and two versions of domination. The first tends to treat domination as a network of decision-making, operating against an unexamined institutional backdrop; the second regards domination as itself an institutional phenomenon, either disregarding power as relating to the active accomplishments of actors, or treating it as in some way determined by institutions". (1979: 89)

The work of Lukes, despite his criticism of the behavioural focus of both Dahl and Bachrach and Baratz, seems to sit uneasily between the two competing schools.

It may be suggested that this is one of the most important question areas concerning power. I shall argue, later in this thesis, that what is required for a comprehensive theory of power is a synthesis of the action and structural approaches.

Thus, only a unified model can encompass both the action and structural manifestations of power.

e) Power or social control?

This question raises the relevance of intentionality to the concept of power. Is power to be restricted to those cases where an actor intentionally acts in such a way as to exercise power over someone? Or, alternatively, could power be regarded as much wider than this, embracing all forms of social control, purposive and non-purposive? Wrong (1979) has argued that power must be confined to cases of intended influence while Hamilton, on similar grounds, differentiates between power (intended) and influence (unintended). Other theorists such as Lukes have developed notions of power which do not necessarily include intentionality. Those theorists who adopt a structuralist notion of power are less likely to insist on the criterion of intention while those who adopt an individualist conception of power are perhaps more likely to adopt such a criterion. As, later in this thesis, a synthesis of the action (individualist) and structuralist approaches will be suggested, then it may be argued that both forms of power are possible.

f) Illegitimate power or legitimate power

This question serves to focus attention upon the simplistic notion found in some analyses that power equates to coercion or force. However, most theorists appear to assume that power embraces both illegitimate and legitimate forms. Hamilton has identified the work of Blau as being one of the closest to the position of equating power with coercion. Blau argues that power is related to the withholding of regularly supplied rewards or the application of punishment in as much as both constitute forms of negative sanction.

The closest a writer comes to the opposite position of an exclusive focus on legitimate power is the work of Parsons who almost defines illegitimate power out of existence.

g) Power as conflict of interests?

Is the use of the term 'power' to be restricted to situations in which a conflict of interests exists between the actors involved in a social relationship? Those that answer in the affirmative can be split into two groups. Firstly there are those who simply state that power can exist in situations where there is a conflict of interests between the parties. Secondly there are those, including Dahl and Emerson, for whom the conflict must also be overt and empirically manifested.

On the other hand there are those who argue that power can exist in the absence of a conflict of interests. Thus Weber (1948) speaks of the power of an individual "even against the resistance of others ..." (1958:180). Lukes has argued that the most insidious form of power is that which prevents conflicts of interest from arising. Hamilton and Martin have also argued that the assumption of a conflict of interests is erroneous and unnecessary.

The problem with this question is that both sets of protagonists mean different things by the term 'conflict of interests'. Those who assert that a conflict of interests must be present for power to exist, are normally referring to an immediate and short-term conflict between the parties over a particular issue. Those who argue the reverse also implicitly utilise a concept of interest, but this time a long-time conflict caused by the structuring of society. Thus Lukes argues that power occurs even where there is no conflict of interests apparent but also notes that this could be because one party has developed a

'false consciousness' and thus is incapable of understanding the nature of it's own 'real' interests.

h) Power as causation?

Another central issue concerns whether power is to be regarded as a causal concept. Dahl, despite his early protestations, appears to introduce this notion into the literature arguing that,

"the closest equivalent to the power relation is the causal relation". (1968: 410)

While not fully supporting Dahl's view, Lukes has argued that the underlying notion of power involves some form of 'causal affecting' together with some criterion of significance. However it has been persuasively argued (Ball 1975/1976) that the adoption of a causal metaphor and its associated classical mechanics imagery has had some unintended and unfortunate consequences and distorted and limited our understanding of power.

i) Resource bases or motive bases?

Weber in his original definition of power suggested that it was,

"the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistence, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests". (1947: 139)

Thus Weber seems willing to consider both resource bases and motive bases of power. Others simply concentrate upon one facet or the other. Thus there are those who concentrate upon the 'power resources' possessed by various actors in any given situation. This can be termed the 'Resource Bases' approach. An example of this approach is provided in the next chapter in the work of French and Raven (1959) who list the

resource bases available to actors. Another group of theorists tend to focus instead upon the reasons for compliance by the subordinate actor. This can be termed the 'Motive Bases' approach. Thus Hamilton and Wrong both concentrate upon a typology of such motive bases.

The difference between the resource base and motive base approaches can be seen as reflecting, in Etzioni's terms, the difference between the power employed and the orientation of the subordinated actor. It has already been suggested in the Prologue that this thesis will concentrate upon the former rather than the latter.

j) One, two or three dimensional power?

Lukes (1974) divides the literature on power into groups by identifying three different faces of power each related to a distinct moral and political position and a different conception of interests. The 'One-Dimensional' theorists who adopt a behavioural stance include Dahl and other 'pluralist' writers. The 'Two-Dimensional' category, which recognises a 'hidden' face of power as either 'unobservable' or 'non-decision', includes Bachrach and Baratz and, if we consider his wider writings and not merely his definitions, the view of Weber. Lukes then advances a 'Three-Dimensional' view which, he argues, transcends the more limited horizons of the other two approaches. One of the central arguments of this thesis will be that any theory of power must be able to represent all three 'faces' or 'dimensions' of power.

We have shown above that, while there are a great number of 'issues' which emerge from the power literature, all of the theories so far discussed are 'partial' in the sense that they address themselves to some but not most of the major issues concerning the concept of power. Any integrated and more comprehensive theory of power would have to take account of all these issues and develop a position in regard to each one.

This review has also demonstrated the way in which conceptions of power are related to various positions taken by theorists. Thus we have seen how in the Community Power Debate the notion of power appeared to be related to the academic subject discipline, the type of methodology used and the general political position adopted. The debate between Lukes and the One and Two-Dimensional theorists can be seen to focus upon epistemological and political positions. Lukes sees Dahl and Bachrach and Baratz as being too closely tied to a behaviourist epistemology and a pluralist political position. Finally, at the macro level, we have seen that the adoption of a metaphor for power such as the causal one, predicted upon the ideas of classical mechanics as utilized by Dahl, can systematically distort our view of power.

One final criticism is that the theories studied so far each focus upon a different level of power. Thus some theories operate on the micro or individual level seeking to explain the power of one social actor viz a viz another, while others focus upon the structural macro determinents of power or the power of groups and collectivities.

Chapter 2

Power in the organisational and industrial relations literature.

2.0 Power in the organisational and industrial relations literature

Having reviewed and analysed some of the main concepts and theories of power developed in the social and political arenas, it is now possible to narrow the focus and turn our attention to the development of the concept in the literature of organisational theory and industrial relations. It is hoped to demonstrate how notions of power percolated down from the more general literature into organisation theory and then, on at least one occasion, into industrial relations. These notions of power will then be evaluated and criticised.

In order to simplify the analysis the literature has been divided into a number of discrete areas. The review commences with the earlier organisational theories of power which have subsequently formed the basis for the development of more sophisticated notions. The strategic contingencies approach which appears as the dominant paradigm of power theorising within the field of organisational theory is then examined. This is followed by a discussion and evaluation of two recent theories of power; one American and one British. Attention is then turned to the field of industrial relations which forms the central focus of this work.

An attempt is made to examine the various ways in which power has been conceptualised in industrial relations theory and to evaluate to what extent these approaches have furthered our understanding of the true 'nature' of power within the subject. In order to achieve this, the theoretical development of the subject will be charted, the various theoretical strands will be delineated and the use of power in industrial relations research discussed.

2.1 The early organisational literature

Much of the early literature in the field of organisational theory or administrative science that addresses the concept of power is American in origin. It is characterised by its use of social science concepts and by its partial and tentative nature. It is useful, however, to consider some of the more influential theories which have later been incorporated into more complex theories of power.

One such seminal work was the attempt by French and Raven (1959) to develop a typology of power. Viewing power as a social relationship between two actors, they suggest that it can be considered in two ways by posing two questions. Firstly, "What determines the behaviour of the agent who exerts power?" and secondly, "What determines the reactions of the recipient of this behaviour?" (1959: 259). These questions reflect, of course, the dichatomy between resource bases and motive bases of power. French and Raven appear to favour the latter arguing that they formulate their theory

"... in terms of the life space of P, the person upon whom power is exerted". (1959: 259)

By 'bases' of power they mean the relationship between A and B which is the source of that power. Thus, what is it in the relationship between A and B that makes B comply with A's wishes? Acknowledging that any one relationship may involve several different 'bases' of power they proceed to identify five common 'bases'. These are as follows,

(a) Reward power — This is based upon B's perception that A has the ability to confer or withhold rewards

(b)	Coercive power	This is based upon B's perception that A has the ability to use physical sanctions and punishment against him.
(c)	Legitimate power	This is based upon the perception by B that A has a 'right' to issue orders or demands and be obeyed.
(d)	Referent power	Based upon B's identification with A as an individual personality.
(e)	Expert power	This is based upon the perception that A possesses certain knowledge or skills which B requires.

French and Raven take great care to ensure that each of their five forms of power is defined in terms of B's perception of A's power; in other words in terms of a motive bases approach. However, when they discuss each of the types in detail they drop this perspective and simply refer to the ability of A to exert power based upon factors he controls or positions he holds. In short, they seem to move towards a resource bases approach. For example they define reward power as "power whose basis is the ability to reward" (1959:263). Similar types of definitions are offered for the other four types of power.

A later theory which discusses both the resource and motive dichotomy is that of Etzioni (1961). He attempts to replace common sense organisational categories by developing a typology based upon organisational control. Thus his classification scheme focuses upon the inter-organisational aspects of power and control. The central variable that Etzioni uses for the development of his typology is that of 'compliance'. This is defined as

"a relationship consisting of the power employed by superiors to to control subordinates and the orientation of the subordinates to this power". (1961: xv)

and elsewhere as,

"the relation in which an actor behaves in accordance with a directive supported by another actor's power and to the orientation of the subordinated actor to the power applied". (1961: 4)

Thus compliance refers to the situation of obedience and to the reasons for that obedience. This enables Etzioni to encompass both resource bases of power and motive bases of power.

Etzioni suggests that compliance is the result of two separate factors; the orientation of the actor twards the power applied by the organisation (their involvement) and the resources which enable the exercise of power. Etzioni then proceeds to identify three forms of 'power'. Coercive power which consists of the use of physical sanctions and constraints; remunerative power which is based upon the control of material resources and rewards; and normative power which "rests on the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards and deprivations". (1961: 5). The way in which organisational actors respond to the exercise of power is then considered and three main types of 'involvement' are located. Alienative involvement which implies an intense negative orientation to the power situation; calculative involvement which consists of either a positive or negative orientation of low intensity; and moral involvement which designates a positive orientation of high intensity.

Figure 2.1 Types of compliance relationship

Forms of power	Forms of involvement		
	Alienative	Calculative	Moral
Coercive	1	2	3
Remunerative	4	5	6
Normative	7	8	9

With three forms of power and three types of involvement, it is clear that there are nine possible compliance relationships (See Figure 2.1) Etzioni argues that three of the relationships (1, 5 and 9)

"are found more frequently than the other six types. This seems to be true because these three types constitute congruent relationships whereas the other six do not". (1961: 12)

Etzioni then uses his typology to analyse the varying compliance relationships. He also seeks to argue that

"organisations tend to shift their compliance structure from incongruent to congruent types and organisations which have congruent structures tend to resist factors pushing them toward compliance structures". (1961: 14)

If the typologies of power of Etzioni and French and Raven are compared it will be noted that there are many similarities. Both use coercive power; Etzioni's remunerative power parallels French and Raven's use of reward power while Etzioni's final form of power seems broad enough to embrace French and Raven's concepts of legitimate power and referent power.

The concept of expert power however does not appear to fit neatly into Etzioni's classification. As we have already seen in Chapter 1 these typologies have been developed by others such as Hamilton (1976, 1977) and Wrong (1979) into more sophisticated and extended typologies.

Deriving the concept of 'lower participants' partly from Etzioni, Mechanic (1962) seeks to analyse the power possessed by such actors as distinct from the formal power and authority structure of the organisation. He attempts to identify the sources of the power possessed by lower participants but his theoretical discussion of power is rather confused. On the one hand, following Dahl and in a causal and behavioural tradition, he defines power as a force. Thus power is, "any force that results in behaviour that would not have occurred if the force had not been present". (1962: 351) Yet despite this view of power as force, and an explicit rejection of the view of power as a relationship, Mechanic also argues that power is closely related to dependence and acknowledges the work of Emerson (1962). Dependence in organisations, he suggests, is achieved by controlling access to information, people and instrumentalities. Instrumentalities are defined as "any aspect of the physical plant of the organisation or its resources (Equipment, machines, money, and so on)". (1962: 352)

Mechanic then considers the sources of power of lower participants in organisation and identifies several factors which enable lower participants to obtain or exercise their power. The possession of desired expertise, the existence of high levels of discretion in task performance and a position of centrality in the work organisation are all factors which are positively related to power.

Thus the more expertise, the more discretion and the greater centrality possessed by a lower participant, the greater is their power. Mechanic also identifies the concept of replaceability or substitutability of an individual or group which is a factor which is negatively related to power. Thus the harder it is to replace an individual or group of individuals, the greater will be their power.

One final stand of organisational theory concerns the linking of power to uncertainty. Crozier (1964) in his study of the bureaucratic phenomenon in the 'Industrial Monopoly', argues that groups, such as the maintenance men in his study, who can control the level of uncertainty for other groups in the organisation then possess power as a result. Thus control of uncertainties generates power. Thompson (1967) takes this notion of uncertainty and locates it within a coherent and advanced theoretical framework. He utilizes systems theory and views organisations,

"as open systems, hence undeterminate and faced with uncertainty, but at the same time as subject to criteria of rationality and hence needing determinateness and certainty". (1967: 10)

Thus again the ability to control and resolve uncertainty confers power upon the individual or group concerned.

2.2 The strategic contingencies theory

The strategic contingencies theory of Hickson and his colleagues (Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck and Pennings 1971), draws together many of the elements mentioned in previous works. They take from Emerson (1962) the notion of power as dependency in a social relationship. This is then allied to the concept of power as control of

uncertainty, first elaborated by Crozier (1964) but developed by Thompson (1967). From Thompson they also adopt the use of an open systems model of organisations. Finally from Mechanic (1962) they utilise the notions of replaceability and centrality as factors contributing to power. However, unlike many of the previous theorists Hickson et al focus upon sub-units of organisations rather than individuals. Thus,

"... organisations are conceived of an interdepartmental systems in which a major task is divided and allotted to the sub-systems, the division of labour creating an interdependence among them. Imbalance of this reciprocal interdependence among the parts gives rise to power relations". (1971: 217)

Hickson et al identify three main variables which lead to intra-organisational dependency. These are coping with uncertainty, substitutability and centrality. The relationships between these variables and power is expressed in a series of hypotheses.

"Hypothesis 1. The more a sub-unit copes with uncertainty, the greater its power within the organisation". (1971: 220)

"Hypothesis 2. The lower the substitutability of the activities of a sub-unit, the greater its power within the organisation". (1971: 221)

"Hypothesis 3a. The higher the pervasiveness of the workflows of a sub-unit, the greater its power within the organisation". (1971: 222)

"Hypothesis 3b. The higher the immediacy of the workflows of a sub-unit, the greater its power within the organisation". (1971: 222)

The first hypothesis merely restates the position of Crozier (1964) and Thompson (1967), whilst the second develops the view of Mechanic (1962). It suggests that the more indispensable a sub-unit becomes and the harder it is to replace, then the more powerful it becomes. In Hypothesis 3a the term pervasiveness refers to the idea that,

"the activities of a sub-unit are central if they are connected with many other activities in the organisation". (1971: 221)

while in hypothesis 3b, immediacy means that the activities of a sub-unit are central if,

"they are essential in the sense that their cessation would quickly and substantially impede the primary workflow of the organisation". (1971: 221)

While presenting these variables as discrete, Hickson et al are aware that, in fact, they are inter-related. In order to allow for this they introduce the notion of "control of contingencies" (1971: 222) as a representation of organisational interdependence. Thus sub-units control contingencies for each others activities and gain power from the dependencies created. As Hickson et al argue,

"The more contingencies are controlled by a sub-unit, the greater its power within the organisation". (1971: 222)

A contingency refers to a situation where an essential activity of one sub-unit is mediated by the activities of another sub-unit. As the independent variables are necessary but not sufficient conditions for organisational dependency then contingencies controlled by a sub-unit as a result of a single variable are not strategic unless the sub-unit

also controls other contingencies by virtue of the other variables. Hickson et al illustrate their strategic contingencies theory of power by the diagram in Figure 2.2. The diagram shows how each of the three major variables; coping with uncertainty, centrality and substitutability affect the control of strategic contingencies and thus the power of a sub-unit. This power is measured in terms of weight, domain and scope. Weight refers to the degree to which one sub-unit affects the probability of another sub-unit acting in a certain way. Domain is the number of sub-units affected by a particular sub-unit, while scope is the range of decision issues affected by a sub-unit. The diagram also shows the effects of routinisation. Hickson et al argue that there are two distinct forms of routinisation. Firstly, routinsation of coping by prevention, which is negatively related to uncertainty of inputs. Thus the more a sub-unit can cope by prevention the less uncertain the environment becomes. Secondly, there is routinisation of coping by information or absorption. This is positively related to substitutability. Thus as a sub-unit has its tasks routinised by information or absorption it increases its subtitutability and thus reduces its power. Hickson and his colleagues have subsequently applied their model to a series of organisational settings with results which they find satisfactory. (Hinings, Hickson, Pennings and Schneck 1974)

The Strategic Contingencies approach has been criticised on many counts. Firstly it may be argued that it is built upon shakey foundations in terms of the traditions which form the basis of the theory. In attempting to summarise these, Clegg and Dunkerley have suggested that Hickson et al (1971) "write in the tradition of an exchange theory allied to a behavioural concept of power, in a functionalist systems framework". (1980: 449)

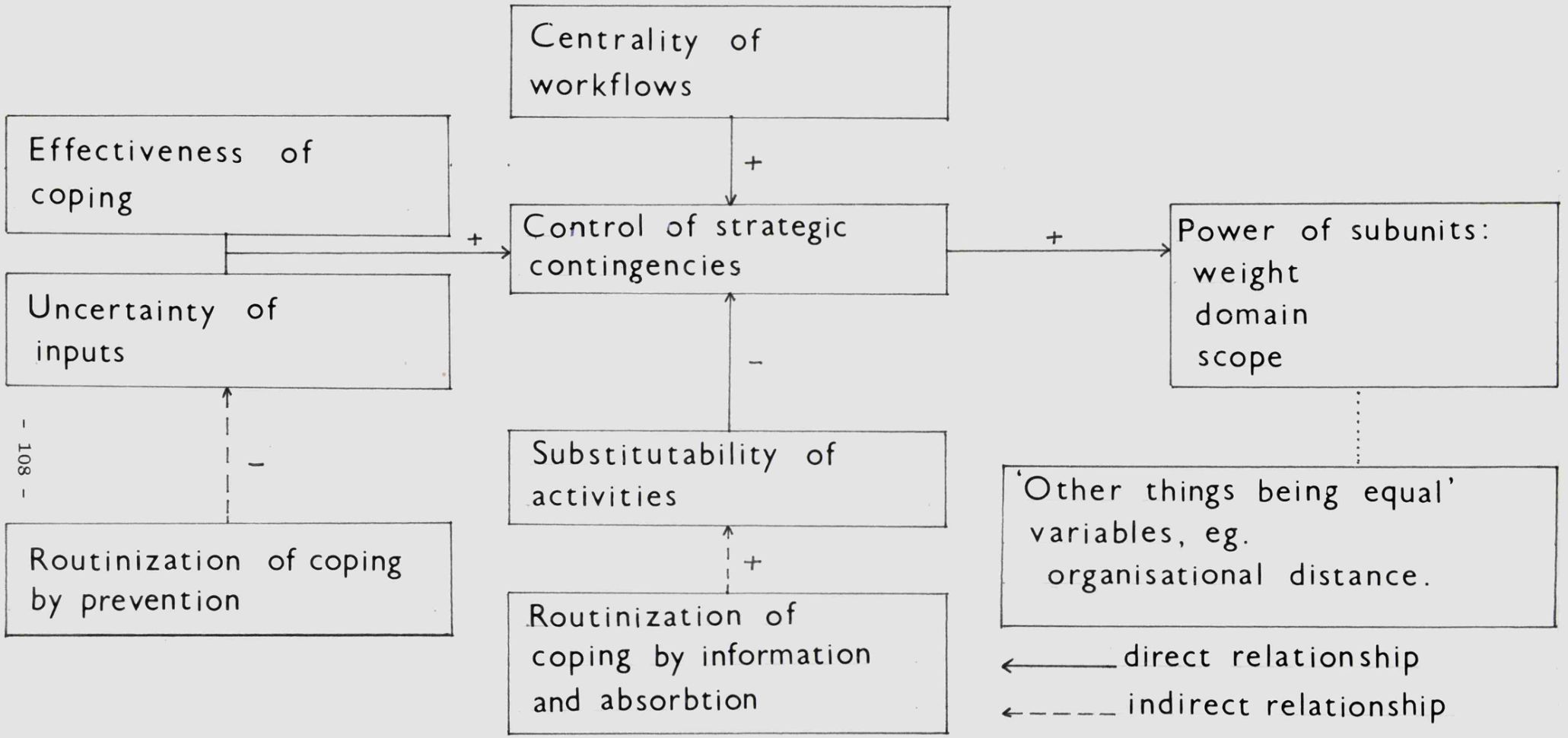


Figure 2·2. The strategic contingencies model
Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck, Pennings. (1971: 223)

To this could be added that they also are located within the recent contingency tradition. The defects and problems of both the exchange tradition and the behavioural concept of power have been discussed elsewhere. The main criticism of the contingency approach is that it consists of a form of 'environmental determinism'. Thus contingency theory sees the organisation as having to cope with contingencies which derive from environmental factors. In the Strategic Contingencies approach to power, the unit of analysis changes from the organisation to the 'sub-unit' and the environmental inputs may come from outside or within the organisation.

The second major criticism concerns the definitions of some of the key terms used in the theory. The approach focuses upon the sub-unit as the appropriate level of analysis. Yet this concept is far from unproblematic. The strategic contingencies theory has to avoid the pitfall of consensual reification in its definition of sub-units. For as Legge (1978) has argued,

"if it is accepted that some individuals within a functioning sub-unit can choose and make decisions for it, another circularity in defining the basis of power emerges. To speak of a sub-unit, which presumably is a collective of various and, possibly, at times, conflicting interests, as one 'thing', is to recognise that some of its members have the power to speak for it. Where does their power come from?" (1978: 29)

Clegg has also pointed to the difficulties encountered by the Strategic Contingencies theory in its treatment of sub-units. He argues that the theory in fact assumes that which it seeks to explain. In order to resolve the difficulties of sub-unit definition the theory assumes that

power of managers. As Clegg demonstrates,

"This assumption enables the theory to talk of 'the environment' and the 'sub-unit' as if they were unitary phenomena. Thus a collective of potentially conflicting interests and world-views is regarded as one thing (a 'sub-unit'), which serves only to demonstrate the power of some members of that collective.They are able to 'speak' for it, representing it as one such thing. Any such assumption of identity in the face of differences would have to spell out how that difference was overcome in a way which the 'strategic contingency' theory does not". (1975: 47)

We have therefore a circular argument where, "Power comes to be located in the portals of power". (Clegg and Dunkerley 1980: 442).

The strategic contingencies theory also appears to have problems with its concept of uncertainty. Initially Hickson et al (1971) define uncertainty as "a lack of information about future events, so that alternatives and their outcomes are unpredictable". (1971: 219) Thus uncertainty is a property of organisational members and their perceptions and not a facet of the environment. Yet later in the paper it is stated that; "Uncertainty might be indicated by the variability of those inputs to the organisation which are taken by the sub-unit". (1971: 220). Here then, uncertainty is located not in the minds of members but in the environmental inputs. Hence in both the case of the concept of 'sub-unit' and of 'uncertainty' it may be argued that power is determined by the structural properties of the organisation.

Thus the main criticism of the strategic contingencies approach is that

it relates power to structural relationships but ignores the origins of these relationships and the processes which created them. As Clegg has eloquently argued,

"Power in the organisation begins to look rather like an ongoing game of chess in which the pieces gain their power through their current position, rather than gaining their current position through their power to make moves according to the rules of the game. In short, the power which a piece has is defined totally in terms of its relationships. This definition entirely neglects the progress of the game in terms of its history and rules". (1975: 49)

Because of their structural determinism Hickson et al (1971) manage to ignore prior questions of the history and rules of game.

2.3 Power in current american organisational theory

It is at this point useful to attempt an overview of the conceptualisation of power in the American organisational theory literature. During the last decade two of the most prolific writers on power in organisations have been Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald Salancik (Pfeffer and Salancik 1974, 1978; Salancik and Pfeffer 1974, 1977; Pfeffer 1977, 1978, 1981). Pfeffer has recently produced a review of power entitled 'Power in Organisations' (1981) which we can usefully consider as representing the 'state of the art' as far as the concept of power in organisational theory is concerned. By an analysis of Pfeffers work we can gain a clear appreciation of the ways in which power is considered in the organisational theory literature.

Pfeffer's concept of power refers to "the capability of one social actor to overcome resistance in achieving a desired objective or

result". (1981: 2). This his view of power seems close to that of, Dahl (1957, 1968). Power is seen as a force sufficient to overcome conflict between social actors in a specific relationship or context. Power is not generalised capacity or potential but is restricted to specific examples of its 'exercise' over specific 'issues'. Pfeffer argues that while power may be difficult to define it is not difficult to recognise. It refers to "the ability of those who possess power to bring about the outcome they desire". (Salanicik and Pfeffer 1977b :3).

Like Hickson et al (1971), Pfeffer argues that the vertical, hierarchical dimension of power is not the only dimension and identifies 'sub-units' as a focus of horizontal power within organisations. Thus, "power is, first of all, a structural phenomenon, created by the division of labour and departmentation that chracterise the specific organisation or set of organisations being investigated". (1981: 4) However Pfeffer does discuss the role of authority and, following Mechanic, the power of lower participants in the organisation.

Power, for Pfeffer, is a static phenomena given by structural factors at a particular point in time. In order to cover the dynamic aspects he discusses the associated concept of 'politics'. Thus "Power is the property of the system at rest; politics is the study of power in action" (1981: 7). Pfeffer defines his concept of organisational politics as involving,

"those activities taken within organisations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices". (1981: 7)

Pfeffer then considers the question of why the concept of power has been so neglected in organisational theory in spite of the common-sense understanding of both power and political behaviour. Two reasons are suggested to explain this neglect. Firstly the difficulties of definition and operationalisation of the concepts. Secondly, and more importantly, he argues that one needs to examine the role of management and organisational theory.

"A more likely explanation for the neglect of power in the management and organisational behaviour literature is found by considering the role of management writing in the management process, and the position of a topic such as power as implied by the various functions served by management writing. The argument to be developed is relatively straightforward: management writing serves a variety of functions; in virtually all these functions there is a strong component of ideology and values; topics such as power and politics are basically incompatible with the values and ideology being developed; therefore, it is useful, to ignore topics which detract from the functions being served by the writing, and this includes tending to ignore or to downplay the topics of power and politics". (1981: 10)

Pfeffer acknowledges that much of management writing is itself political and that it makes unwarranted assumptions. He also notes that this can be clearly seen when one compares American theories with the European organisational literature and its more context-specific, historical and wide political view and where it is assumed

"that conceptions of organisations themselves are products of a social construction of reality which also constitutes an ingredient of politics played out on a macro-social level". (1981: 15)

Yet despite identifying these notions, Pfeffer fails to fully develop them in his account of power.

Pfeffer suggests that while power and politics are important and neglected factors in organisations they constitute a political model which is just one of several competing models of organisation. These models include the Rational Choice model; the Bureaucratic model and the Decision Process or Organised Anarchy models. Figure 2.3 briefly describes the four competing models on eight relevant dimensions. Pfeffer appears to suggest that the political power model increasingly characterises many organisations. Having located his political power model we can now move on to a more detailed examination.

Pfeffer begins by examining how we can assess power in organisations. He suggests that this requires two separate operations. Firstly the actors in the power relationship need to be identified and secondly the relative amounts of their power need to be evaluated. Before considering how this can be done Pfeffer raises two associated problems. One concerns what Dahl (1957) called the problem of the chameleon. This refers to individuals who follow the lead of, and always side with, a powerful actor within the organisation. Thus they are usually on the winning side of any dispute but may have little or no power. The second difficulty concerns what Friedrich (1937) termed the 'rule by anticipated reactions'. Dahl (1957) suggested that there must exist a 'time-lag' between the actions of A and the responses of B or power cannot be said to exist. This conception is dictated by his causal metaphor. But this need not be the case. As Pfeffer argues,

Figure 2·3

Model

Dimension	Rational	Bureaucratic	Decision Process/ Organized Anarchy	Political Power
Goals, preferences	Consistent within and across social actors	Reasonably consistent	Unclear, ambiguous, may be constructed ex post to rationalize action	Consistent within social actors; inconsistent, pluralistic within the organization
Power and control	Centralized	Less centralized with greater reliance on rules	Very decentralized, anarchic	Shifting coalitions and interest groups
Decision Process	Orderly, substantively rational	Procedural rationality embodied in programs and standard operating procedures	Ad hoc	Disorderly, characterized by push and pull of interests
Rules and Norms	Norm of optimization	Precedent, tradition	Segmented and episodic participation in decisions	Free play of market forces, conflict is legitimate and expected
Information and Computational Requirements	Extensive and systematic	Reduced by the use of rules and procedures	Haphazard collection and use of information	Information used and withheld strategically
Beliefs about action-consequence relationships	Known at least to a probability distribution	Consensually shared acceptance of routines	Unclear, ambiguous technology	Disagreements about technology
Decisions	Follow from value-maximizing choice	Follow from programs and routines	Not linked to intention; result of intersection of persons, solutions, problems	Result of bargaining and interplay among interests
Ideology	Efficiency and effectiveness	Stability, fairness, predictability	Playfulness, loose coupling, randomness	Struggle, conflict, winners and losers

Overview of Four Organisational Decision Making Models.

Source: Pfeffer (1981:31).

"The less powerful social actor may and, in fact, probably will take into account the likely response of the more powerful in framing action in the first place. Thus, an attempt to assess power must try to account for the extent to which initial expressions of preference already reflect the power of others in the organisation". (1981: 46)

Interestingly enough, despite this statement, Pfeffer again fails to fully develop the implications of this idea in his work.

How is the relative power of political actors in the organisation to be identified? Pfeffer discusses five separate methods. Firstly there is the process of assessing power by its determinents. This is attributed to Gamson (1968) amongst others. It involves understanding what causes power in a particular situation and then measuring the relative power of social actors by demonstrating how much of the cause of power they possess. Thus "instead of trying to measure power directly, power is assessed by considering how much of each of the determinents of power the various individuals, sub-units, or groups possess". (1981: 48). Pfeffer acknowledges that this approach creates problems of operationalisation.

The second method of assessing power consists of examining the consequences or results of power. This is, in essence, the so-called 'issue' approach used by the pluralists including Dahl (1957) in the Community Power Debate. This approach argues that power is used in organisations to affect the decision-making process and therefore the distribution of power can be elucidated by an examination of which social actors benefit most from the decisions taken. As Pfeffer suggests, there, "are many examples of the consequences of power:

budget distributions among sub-units, the allocation of positions, the making of strategy and policy choices which are favoured by and are favourable to various actors, and so forth". (1981: 49). As we discussed in the first Chapter there are several problems with this approach. The researcher needs to be able to distinguish 'key' decisions over which conflicts will occur and thus which will reflect the power distribution and also it must be possible to identify which social actors have won and lost in relation to these issues. Both of these can, at times, be problematic, especially in the field of industrial relations where winning and losing is not clear cut and where both parties often 'cloud' the result with rhetoric.

Power can also be assessed by analysing the distribution of the symbols of power. Pfeffer has argued that these symbols

"include things such as titles, special parking places, special eating facilities, rest-rooms, automobiles, airplanes, office size, placement and furnishings, and other pre-requisites of position and power. Such symbols are particularly likely to be employed to distinguish among vertical levels of power within organisations". (1981: 50)

Thus the main problem with this form of power assessment is that it tends to focus upon the formal power and authority structures and ignore other less formal sources and distributions of power.

The fourth method of assessing power listed by Pfeffer is the reputational method used by sociologists (e.g. Hunter 1953) in the Community Power Debate. This consists of asking various respondents to list and rank other social actors in terms of the power they possess.

This method has also been extensively used in the field of organisational theory. It has been used by Perrow (1970) and by Hinings et al (1974) in their empirical testing of strategic contingences approach. Pfeffer and Salanicik (1974) in their study of the power of academic departments at the University of Illinois asked department heads to rate the relative power of the various other departments. A similar process was used in the later replication study (Moore 1979). This approach makes two assumptions both of which may be problematic. Firstly the method assumes that social actors are knowledgeable about the distribution of power within their organisations. This is interesting as Pfeffer and Salanicik were members of staff at the University of Illinois at the time of their study. The second assumption is that respondents will be willing to disclose what they know about power distributions. But why should they do this? They have little to gain and could lose by sharing, and thus decreasing, the scarcity value of their knowledge.

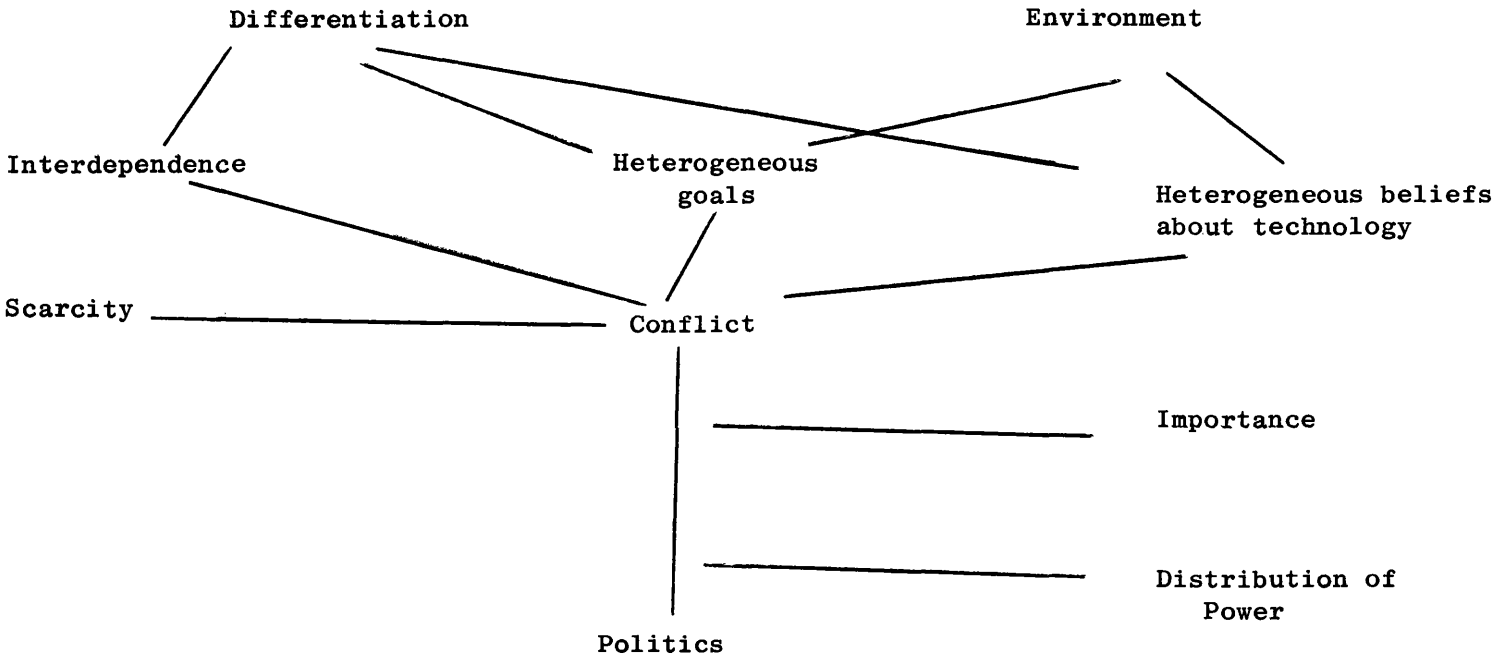
The final method of assessing the power of organisational actors is the use of representational indicators. Pfeffer has defined representational indicators as assessing, "the position of social actors in critical organisational roles such as membership on influential boards and committees or occupancy of key administrative posts". (1981: 57). It is argued that these positions provide their incumbents with power because they gain control over resources, information, and decisions as a result. These 'sources' of power will be developed later.

Pfeffer argues that after the relative power of the various organisational actors has been assessed, we need to examine the conditions

necessary for the use of power. The factors which produce power and enable its used in organisations are shown in a model in diagrammatic form in Figure 2.4.

Pfeffer identifies three main conditions which produce the use of power in organisations. The first is interdependence which is defined as "a situation in which what happens to one organisational actor affects what happens to others". (1981: 68). The second is the existence of heterogeneous goals, or goals which are incompatible. Associated with this condition is a related one which suggests that there needs to be disagreement between the actors in terms of technology. Pfeffer uses technology to refer to "the relationship between decisions and outcomes" (1981:69). The final condition producing the use of power is scarcity. Pfeffer postulates that the greater the scarcity, the greater the power and effort will be expended in order to resolve the decision. These three conditions, interdependence, heterogeneous goals and beliefs and scarcity thus produce conflict. Whether this conflict actually results in the exercise of power depends upon two other factors. Firstly, the degree of importance attached to the issue, decision or resource by one or more of the organisational actors. Thus is the issue a 'key' one or merely trivial? The second condition is the distribution of power. Pfeffer suggests that the greater the dispersal of power throughout the organisation, the greater the visible exercise of power in political activity. Thus, by implication, Pfeffer is postulating that the ultimate form of power is one where power is centralised and possessed by one group or actor (domination) and in this situation power will tend to be invisible, as political acitvity will be absent.

Figure 2.4 A model of the conditions producing the use of power and politics in organisational decision making



There are two other factors in Pfeffer's model. Differentiation refers "to the fact that in most large organisations, there is specialisation of the participants and sub-units by task - a division of labour which enables the organisation to achieve certain economies but which also entails some costs". (1981: 71). This differentiation obviously is related to interdependence through the division of labour and also leads to the holding of different goals and beliefs. Pfeffer also suggests that these goals and beliefs can be environmentally shaped in that organisational actors join the organisation with certain preferences and beliefs related to their previous experience.

What then are the sources of power in organisation? Pfeffer lists five main sources of power. Firstly he acknowledges the notion that power resides in the other's dependence, an idea developed by Emerson (1962) and, later, Blau (1964) and Thompson (1967). This notion has been further developed by Pfeffer and Salanicik (1978) in the organisational context.

Secondly, power arises from the control of resources. It is argued that organisations require a continuous provision of resources in order to survive. Thus those individuals or sub-units who can provide the most scarce resources will become powerful. Pfeffer suggests that such resources include "money, prestige, legitimacy, rewards and sanctions, and expertise ..." (1981: 101). Thirdly, as we have already seen, some theorists argue that power derives from the ability of an actor or sub-unit to cope with uncertainty. (cf Hickson et al 1971). Fourthly Pfeffer argues that power can derive from being irreplaceable. Thus, "the argument is that power accrues to those social actors who provide a critical resource for the

organisation and who cannot be readily replaced in that function". (1981: 112-113). This factor has been mentioned by many writers including French and Raven (1959) in terms of 'expert power'; Mechanic (1962) as the concept of 'replacability'; and Hickson et al (1971) as 'substitutability'. Pfeffer points out that the degree of substitutability is not fixed but can be varied by use of certain strategies.

All the preceding views of the sources of power take a rather static perspective on the determination of power. Pfeffer's final factor is a more dynamic one. He argues that power can accrue from the ability to affect the decision process. Thus, decisions, "are made in a sequential process, and it is possible for a social actor within the organisation to have power because of his or her ability to affect some part of the decision process". (1981: 115). Organisational actors can affect the decision process in several ways. The actor may be able to affect or control the premises or assumptions that are used in making the decision and thus ensure a favourable decision result. Alternatively, as any decision is usually a choice between alternative courses of action, then, the ability to control which alternatives are presented for discussion confers power. As Pfeffer argues,

"It is clear that the final choice among alternatives will be heavily dependent on the alternatives which are considered at all and which survive the initial winnowing process... Those in a position to define the alternatives to be considered have tremendous impact on the final decision outcome, regardless of the voting or decision rules used to make the final choice". (1981: 119)

Finally, the ability to control the information presented to the decision-makers confers power and enables the decision outcome to be affected.

During his discussion of political strategies and tactics Pfeffer discusses both unobtrusive and more obtrusive strategies for the exercise of power. Pfeffer agrees with Bachrach and Baratz (1962) that one of the least obtrusive ways of exercising power is to prevent a decision issue from emerging in the first place. Thus power is related to the process of 'non-decision-making' and 'control of the issue agenda'. On a more obtrusive level power can be exercised by the use of coalitions formed around specific issues. Thus a typical political strategy involves the building of both external constituencies and internal allionees or coalitions. A final strategy involves giving a representation of a group or sub-unit, whose support is required, a position on some committee or other body. As Pfeffer argues such 'cooptation',

"is so often effective because it exposes the coopted representatives to informational social influence, and confronts them with conformity pressures and the necessity of justifying their actions. Cooptation provides labels and expectations that increase identification and commitment to the organisation, gives the representatives a stake and legitimate position in the organisation, and motivates them to be interested in the organisations survival and success". (1981: 167)

What, then, does Pfeffer's work tell us that is novel or illuminating concerning the concept of power? Pfeffer's work can be said to represent current thinking about power within American organisational theory and administrative science (especially that tradition which is located within

the pages of Administrative Science Quarterly). Yet Pfeffer's work does not provide an addition to our knowledge of the processes of power. His work consists merely of a review and catalogue of the power literature reiterating many of the theories and notions of power that we have already discussed including the issue and reputational approaches, dependencies, resource bases, control of uncertainty and substitutability. However his model of power and politics in organisational decision making is incapable of uniting these diverse threads into a coherent and comprehensive model of power.

2.4 Organisations as bargaining and influence systems

If we turn our attention from the situation in the U.S.A, we can consider the most recent 'school' of power theorising on this side of the Atlantic. Peter Abell et al (1975) have attempted to develop a distinctive theory of power in organisations, rejecting the control of resources approach and the reputational model of power in favour of a focus on decision making processes. In doing this he chooses to concentrate upon one of the sources of power later identified by Pfeffer and thus locate himself in a Dahlian position. Abell views organisations as,

"complex mechanisms for arriving at collective decisions through bargaining and influence processes amongst a set of power-and-influence holding units. In short, we view an organisation (...) as a bargaining and influence system". (1975: 11)

Abell proposes the stress on bargaining for two main reasons. Firstly, because power and influence are characteristically involved in the process of decision making. Secondly, because all organisationl tasks involve varying degrees of discretion which allows 'room' for power and influence to be exerted. Both these statements are true because organisations are systems faced with uncertainty. In this Abell follows Crozier (1964), Thompson (1967) and Hickson et al (1971).

Having stated his theoretical position Abell proceeds to delineate concepts of power which can be operationalised. He states that these concepts are to be considered in relation to the epistemological notion of 'globalism' which means the surrender of "local complexity for a global relevance in the study of complex structures". (1975: 13). He is also very much concerned with questions of 'which' groups possess power; 'what' degrees of power they hold; and 'what' issues they exercise power over. He is less concerned therefore, with questions of 'why' the group is powerful. Abell's general definition of power is as follows:

"So, expressing it rather crudely, the power and influence of an actor will be defined in terms of his ability to obtain his objectives in the face of others with competing objectives (....). Intraorganisational conflict is thus a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for the empirical study of bargaining power and influence as we construe them". (1975: 14).

Influence occurs where A influences B to change his objectives in a given situation. Put more formally, the influence of A over B is, "the ability of A to modify B's preferred outcomes in a bargaining and influence situation, all other influences 'held constant". (1975: 15)

Bargaining power occurs where B retains his objectives but 'loses out' and A achieves his objectives. Abell, therefore, defines the bargaining power of A as, "his ability to obtain his preferred outcomes, when facing competing preferred outcomes, in a bargaining situation". (1975: 15). It can be seen from these definitions that Abell's view of power is a 'one-dimensional' one, in that for him the absence of observable conflict means that power cannot be studied even though it may exist. Thus Abell's work focuses upon observable decisions, identifiable decision-makers or protagonists and an observable conflict of interests between them. However it may be argued that this approach might have several problems. It ignores the fact that power can be exercised by preventing certain issues from arising (Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Pfeffer 1981). It fails to deal with possible 'concealed' decision makers and does not take account of Lukes' three dimensional argument that the most serious form of power is the very shaping of people's preferences and the creation of an artificial consensus. Abell's approach also presents an 'all or nothing' perspective to the measurement of power. Thus the actor who prevails on an issue is seen as 'powerful'. Yet other actors many lose had a certain degree of power but not enough to 'win' the decision.

However Abell is fully aware of such challenges to his work. Later in his book he argues that,

"Power and influence are not only related to the degree to which actors can obtain their objectives, but also to 'forces' that engender, maintain and establish the persuasiveness of the constraining norms. For instance, if top management are in a position in various ways to limit the perceived feasible objectives of lower participants despite

their participation in decision making, then this is very much an aspect of managements power". (1975: 27)

Yet, despite this understanding, Abell argues that such facets of power lie outside the range of his model. Indeed he explicitly acknowledges that power within the organisation is constrained and affected by the wider social systems within which the organisation is located, but simply notes that,

"The present model does not formally handle these very wide-ranging issues except to observe that influence and bargaining take place within the constraining limits of a normative system which can be more or less well described". (1975: 27)

It may be suggested that Abell is unable to fully develop the limitations which affect his work because of an overriding attachment to a particular espistemology and derived methodology. Not only is Abell locked within a positivist, behaviourist epistemology but he is also limited by the associated desire for quantifiable, empirical measurement. This leads him to omit variables and facets of power which he himself acknowledges are of importance.

2.5 The development of industrial relations theory

As in many disciplines, the theoretical development of industrial relations is not open to straightforward simple description because the development has been disjunctive, obtuse and lacking in consensus. Thus in order to explore the way in which the concept of power has been handled in industrial relations theory it is necessary briefly to analyse that theoretical development.

The last two decades have, for the subject of Industrial Relations, been a period of re-orientation. This has taken the form of attempts to develop a theoretical model or approach suitable for the subject. The need for such an approach arose largely because of the way in which industrial relations research had developed since its inception in the United Kingdom. Bain and Clegg in their survey of industrial relations research suggest that for the most part such research had been, "characterised by fact-finding and description rather than by theoretical analysis and generalisation". (1974: 103). Most of the early work in industrial relations (and indeed a good deal of the more recent) can be classified as empiricist and positivist in nature. Researchers assumed that knowledge of industrial relations could be extended by the addition of more 'facts' concerning the 'institutions' involved in the field. It may be argued that this early descriptive phase of the development of industrial relations can be described as its 'pre-theoretical' stage. In the 1950's many writers in the field recognised that if industrial relations was to develop and obtain discipline status, then a theoretical framework had to be established to systematise and integrate the large amount of data already available. Prior to this period researchers had simply selected discrete areas for study when faced with the enormity of the industrial relations field. This led to an absence of macro level theory. As most researchers concentrated upon the major organised bodies (trade unions, employers associations and Government machinery) it is not surprising that this was labelled the 'institutional' approach to industrial relations. The purpose of theory was, therefore, "to relate isolated facts, to point to new types of inquiries and to make research more additive". (Dunlop 1958: 6). In a famous passage that is worth quoting at length, Dunlop argues that theory is

necessary because:

"the field of industrial relations today may be described in the words of Julian Huxley: 'Mountains of facts have been piled upon the plains of human ignorance .... The result is a glut of raw material. Great piles of facts are lying around unutilised, or utilised only in an occasional or partial manner'. Facts have outrun ideas. Integrating theory has lagged far behind expanding experience. The many worlds of industrial relations have been changing more rapidly than the ideas to interpret, to explain and to relate them". (1958:vi).

While this is the argument which led to the development of theory, it should be noted that the idea of a 'mountain of facts' in industrial relations has been recently criticised (Wood 1978) despite its 'taken for granted' status by most writers in the field. He argues that we might be better off to accept that the assumed 'mountain of facts' does not exist, because the claim that theory can integrate the existing facts assumes that they have been collected in a highly competent and 'fastidious way'. As Wood correctly points out,

"If theory and concrete analysis are linked in some way, then surely the appeal for theory, if it is to amount to more than a retreat to sterile taxonomy building and fancy phrases, amounts to a criticism of the kinds of questions that past researchers have been asking: if this is so, how can we be complacent and uncritical about the facts we purport to know?" (1978: 52)

The other main incentive for theoretical development was its supposed necessity if industrial relations was to achieve the status of a discipline.

Thus theory was a means of delineating the field of industrial relations. Many writers agreed that the survival and development of industrial relations as a discipline was dependent upon the creation of a broad conceptual or theoretical framework serving to integrate the disparate strands of thinking and research now roughly juxtaposed under the banner 'industrial relations'. (Somers 1969: 39)

What, then, have been the theoretical developments in the field of industrial relations? A number of attempts have been made to classify the theoretical concepts used in industrial relations (Blain and Gennard 1970, Walker 1976), but for the purposes of this section the scheme adopted by Schienstock (1981) will be used. This delineates the following threads of theoretical development;

a) The systems model

b) The action theory model

c) The politico-economic or Marxist model

It is recognised that one of the problems with classification systems such as the above is that they tend to deflect attention away from the subtle divisions and differences within each 'school' and direct attention toward basic similarities. Thus within the Systems model are located general systems theorists (Dunlop 1958), open systems theorists (Craig 1973) and the 'Oxford School'. There are wide differences between each of these and indeed within the 'Oxford School' itself. However, the scheme provides a framework within which a discussion of the theoretical developments of industrial relations is possible.

Running parallel to the three theoretical and methodological strands identified by Schienstock are three political or ideological approaches

to industrial relations. These are;

a) The unitarist perspective

b) The pluralist perspective

c) The radical perspective

These political perspectives are interrelated and intertwined, sometimes implicitly, in other cases explicitly, with the theoretical and methodological strands. During this chapter all six approaches will be described and their use of the concept of power analysed.

2.6 Systems models of industrial relations

The first major theoretical work in industrial relations was that of John T. Dunlop. In 1958 he published his seminal "Industrial Relations Systems" in which he proposed a theoretical framework designed to free industrial relations from,

"the preoccupation, if not the obsession, with labour peace and warfare". (1958: 380)

The basis of his approach is his use of the concept of a 'system' which he largely derives from Parsons' (1956) discussion of the interactions of the social and economic systems. It should be noted that this is a very general use of the term 'system' and is not related to the more scientific use of the same term as in the work of Von Bertalanffy (1950) or Buckley (1967).

Dunlop argues that society can be considered as a total social system, sub-divided into its constituent parts; the industrial relations, political and economic sub-systems. These sub-systems are interrelated and interact both with each other and the total social system.

Dunlop suggests that this 'systems approach' helps to distinguish three separate analytical problems;

"(a) the relation of the industrial relations system to the society as a whole (b) the relation of the industrial-relations system to the subsystem known as the economic system and (c) the inner structure and characteristics of the industrial relations sub-system itself". (1958: 7)

The details of an industrial relations system have been described by Dunlop as follows:

"Every industrial relations system involves three groups of actors: 1) workers and their organisations, 2) managers and their organisations, and 3) government agencies concerned with the workplace and the work community. Every industrial relations system creates a complex of rules to govern the workplace and work community ... The actors in an industrial relations system are regarded as confronting an environmental context at any one time. The environment is comprised of three interrelated contexts: the technology, the market or budgetary constraints and the power relations and status of the actors .... The system is bound together by an ideology or understandings shared by all the actors. The central task of a theory of industrial relations is to explain why particular rules are established in particular industrial relations systems and how and why they change in response to changes affecting the system". (1958: viii-ix)

From the above we can see that power plays a central part in the industrial relations theory of Dunlop.

The industrial relations system comprises various actors whose behaviour is influenced by the environment of which an important part is the relative power and status of the actors themselves. This relative power or status thus affects the crux of any industrial relations system; the production of a complex of rules. Thus the nature of the rules produced at any time will partially reflect the power and status of the actors in the system.

How then does Dunlop define the notion of power? Unfortunately, given the centrality of power in his theory, Dunlop makes no attempt to define power at all. He simply notes that the distribution of power in the industrial relations system will reflect to a certain degree the distribution of power among the actors in the wider society. This neglect of the concept of power itself obviously weakens Dunlop's theory.

It is also important to note at this juncture that Dunlop's use of ideology signals that on another dimension he is adopting a 'pluralist position. This will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. It is sufficient to note at present that, while he argues that each of the actors in the industrial relations system has a different ideology, it is a prerequisite of the theory that these ideologies are reducible to a basic consensus. As he argues,

"An industrial relations system requires that these ideologies be sufficiently compatible and consistent so as to permit a common set of ideas which recognise an acceptable role for each actor". (1958: 17)

Since the publication of 'Industrial Relations Systems' in 1958 there have been attempts to re-appraise and develop the systems approach to industrial relations and this trend has increased in recent years. Craig (1973) and Blain and Gennard (1970), for example, have attempted to refine and improve the concept of an industrial relations system. Craig utilises the 'open systems' approach derived from the natural sciences and the work of Von Bertalanffy (1950) in order to improve upon Dunlop's less specific use of the term system. Open systems theory assumes that the subject matter (industrial relations) consists,

"of a set of interrelated parts which operate in an environment. This implies that the system, in addition to its own inputs (within-puts) also receives inputs from the environment and, through a process of transformation, produces outputs for the system itself and emits them into the environmental sub-systems". (1973: 8)

The open systems model used by Craig contains four basic elements; inputs, the procedures for converting inputs into outputs, the outputs and a feedback loop which is required if the system is to be dynamic.

Craig defines an industrial relations system as including,

"a complex of private and public activities, operating in an environment which is concerned with the allocation of rewards to employees for their services, and the conditions under which services are rendered". (1973: 8)

His conceptualation of such a system is shown in diagrammatic form in Figure 2.5

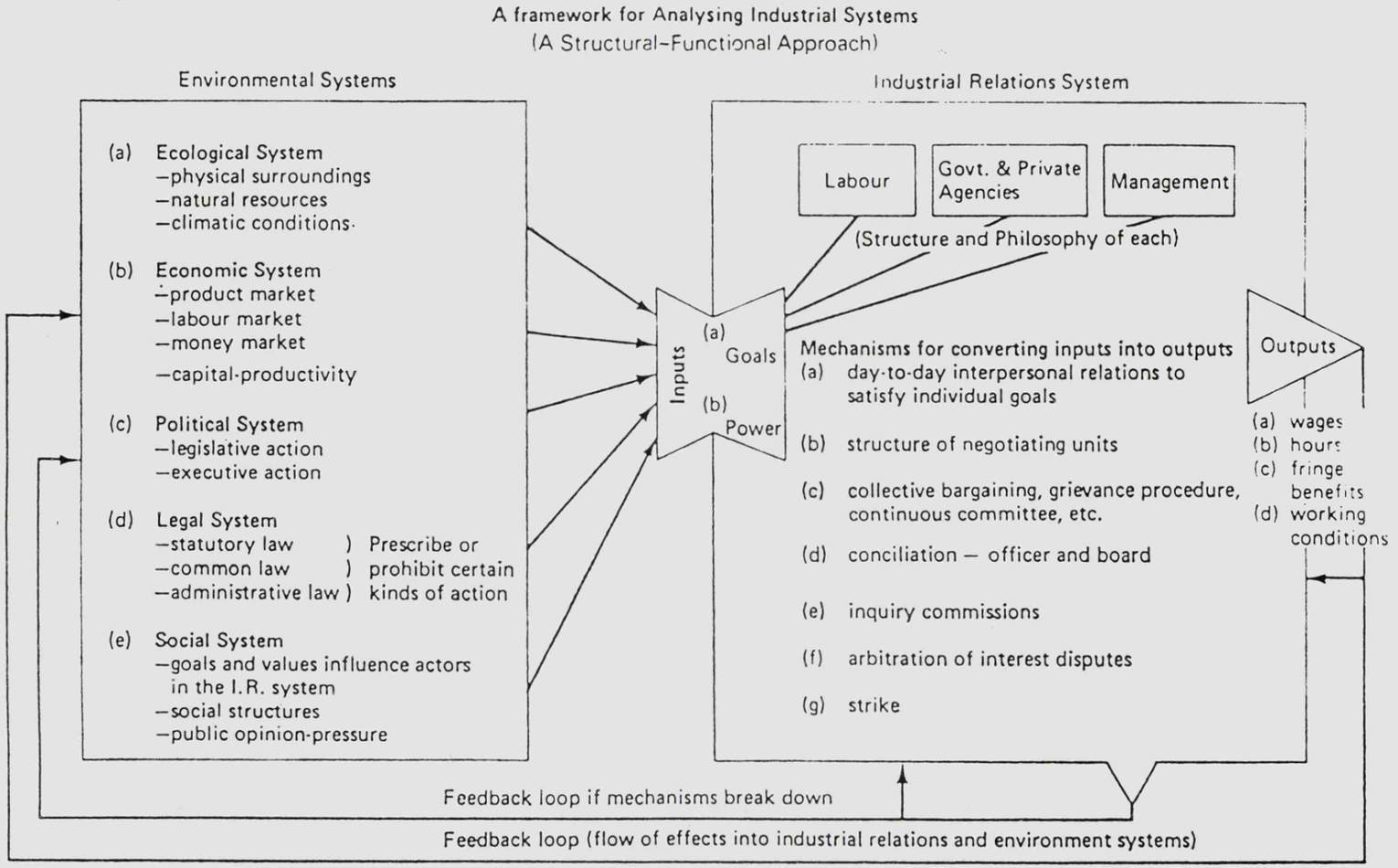


Figure 2·5

Source: (Craig 1973)

It can be seen from this diagram that, as with Dunlop, Craig assigns power a central place in his schema. The various environmental systems affect the goals and power of the actors and thus the outputs of the system. Unlike Dunlop, however, Craig offers a definition. Power,

"refers to the ability of an actor to satisfy his goals despite the resistance of others". (1973: 9-10)

This definition of power mirrors that of Weber. Craig says little else concerning power except to point to the difficulties in operationalising the concept.

Blain and Gennard (1970) point to two interrelated faults with the systems approach. Firstly, they suggest that it is simply a structural concept which merely shows the relationships between the various subsystems but does not explain the dynamics of their behaviour. In order to introduce a dynamic element into the model they suggest the use of comparative static analysis which compares the system at two different points in time. Secondly they argue that the approach ignores the level of the individual. While this is fair, their attempt to add the individual into the model, by the simple addition of a 'personality factor' to the components of the industrial relations system listed by Dunlop, is too simplistic. Blain and Gennard do not discuss the concept of power in any more detail than Dunlop.

During the 1960's there developed in the United Kingdom a group of writers based upon Oxford who became extremely influential in the development of the academic study of industrial relations and upon policy especially through the Donovan Report. This group of academics which included H.A. Clegg, the late Allan Flanders, Alan Fox,

Lord McCarthy and G.S. Bain became known as the 'Oxford School'. Their general approach to industrial relations can be characterised by a concentration on job regulation, the voluntary reform of the regulation system and its relationship with pluralist thought. Because of this it has been variously termed the liberal-pluralist approach, the voluntaristic-pluralist approach or the reformist movement. However the existence and coherence of the school should not be uncritically assumed. It may be argued that they were not as internally homogeneous as they have been portrayed and that the school never approached the position of a dominant perspective because of the existence of dissenting voices such as H.A. Turner.

However, the group do exhibit certain pertinent similarities in their work. As Wood and Elliot have argued,

"At a practical level they were, amongst other things, concerned to defend trade unions from public hostility in the changing economic and political context, opposed to the widespread use of law as an instrument for the reform of labour relations, committed to the principle of collective bargaining as the best means of conducting industrial relations and involved in attempting to develop industrial relations as a distinctive and legitimate academic pursuit". (1977:107)

While they were generally distrustful of theory, it may be argued that their practical approach masks an undisclosed set of theoretical assumptions.

Perhaps the most theoretical writer in the 'Oxford School' was Allan Flanders. Flanders argued that industrial relations is the study of the institutions of job regulation.

Thus, following Dunlop, he focuses upon the output of the industrial relations system; that is the 'web of rules'. Unlike Dunlop, Flanders does not take into account the environmental contexts. Instead he sees the system of rules as being determined by the process of collective bargaining which is regarded not as a purely economic phenomenon as in the work of the Webbs (1902) and Dunlop (1944) but in essence as a political institution following Ross (1948). Thus, for Flanders, the process of joint regulation is "primarily a political institution". (1970: 220) in which,

"the parties have many other considerations in mind apart from the conflicting interests of their constituents as buyers and sellers of labour". (1970: 226)

Despite this focus upon the political nature of the joint regulation process and thus the centrality of power to his conception of industrial relations, Flanders fails to explain his use of the concept or indeed to address it directly, seemingly content to utilise it as an unexplicated common sense term. It may be argued, however, that there is in Flanders work, an unspoken but inherent notion of power which is similar to that of the 'Bargaining Power' theorists to be discussed later.

The systems approach of Dunlop and his later followers combined with the 'Oxford School' has come to form one of the major strands of the orthodoxy of industrial relations. It can be argued that these approaches have created several problems for the understanding of industrial relations phenomena in general and the notion of power in particular.

The first problem is that the systems approach concentrates upon the output of the system rather than the inputs. Thus both Dunlop and Flanders concentrate upon what they see to be the output of an industrial relations system; a 'web of rules'. This leads to a concern with effects, results and outcomes rather than with causes. Singh has drawn attention to the fact that although Dunlop has "defined an output, little or nothing is said about his input or system transformation". (1976: 62).

As an example of this kind of thinking, industrial relations research into strikes has tended to concentrate upon a description of their incidence and an evaluation of their effects (Turner 1969, McCarthy 1970, Silver 1973) while the more vexing and problematic notion of causation has been largely ignored. Similarly most studies of work-groups have concentrated on the effects of group size or work task upon behaviour rather than any analysis of how workgroups arise and attitudes are generated. Thus the production and nature of rules is the focus of attention while other parts of the system such as the relative power of the actors is largely ignored or 'taken for granted'.

Secondly, the idea of a 'web of rules' and the subsequent focus on job regulation appears to reflect a conservative bias in the theoretical framework used by Dunlop and Flanders. Drawn as they are from the wider theories of structural functionalism via Parsons (1951) and social systems theory via the work of Dunlop's later followers (e.g. Craig 1973), these approaches are based upon organismic or mechanical analogies of human conduct which emphasise the tendencies to equilibrium or homeostasis. Thus the approaches assume the existence of order, stability and regulation rather than conflict and charge.

As Fatchett and Whittingham point out,

"the practical application of the theoretical framework had led to an inability or reluctance to deal with conflict and change". (1976: 53)

Indeed, Fatchett and Whittingham argue that while the focus of the systems approach on job regulation,

"has increased our understanding of the rules of job regulation, it has been achieved at the cost of an almost total disregard of the causes of conflict". (1976: 55)

It is for this reason that Margerison has suggested that conflict should be "the basic concept that (forms) the basis of the study of industrial relations" (1969: 274). This conservative or consensual bias is illustrated by Dunlop's treatment of the concept of ideology. While recognising that the actors in the industrial relations system may have differing ideologies he insists that these must be reduceable to a single consensual ideology which binds the system together.

Several authors have argued, however, that the allegations of a conservative on consensual bias are unfounded. Blain and Gennard (1970) have suggested the use of comparative static analysis to introduce a dynamic element into the systems approach. This would enable the approach to deal with the problems of conflict and change. Singh (1976) on the other hand rejects the conflict/consensus dichotomy. He suggests that conflict and consensus are ends of a continuum and and that the use of terms 'stability' and 'equilibrium' do not imply a static system. A true 'open-systems' approach should, he argues, be able to both recognise and account for conflict and consensus.

Therefore, "It is permissible and useful to use a systems model for industrial relations because a system is not only neutral in its explanation of phenomena, but it explicitly recognises the part played by human beings in society and therefore avoids reification". (1976: 69). Craig (1973) explicitly argues that his model assumes neither consensus or conflict.

"... in this framework neither harmony nor conflict is assumed among the actors. Rather these variables are set out separately as problematic and are to be determined by reference to the empirical reality of the system under study". (1973: 10)

Wood (1978) argues that while Dunlop can be located as a functionalist, there is nothing inherent in functionalism, especially in Parsons, which implies that "order is inevitable, normal, or non-problematic". (1978: 46). Indeed he suggests that the central concern of functionalists is in how order is achieved, which presupposes the existence of conflict. While many writers would disagree with this reading of functionalism (Gouldner 1970, C. Wright Mills 1959) there are some who would support Wood (Rocher 1974, Martins 1974).

One of the problems of this argument is that it is carried out on two levels. Some participants (Singh 1976, Craig 1973) are referring to the more sophisticated 'open-systems' theories and models. To the extent that these move away from mechanistic and organismic analogies of human conduct to embrace factional or catastrophic analogies, it may be argued that they can be developed to meet many of the previous criticisms. However most of the theoretical work in industrial relations is still grounded in less developed, cruder, systems models to which the criticisms still apply.

The third difficulty is that the systems approach tends to ignore the level of the individual and the workgroup. Thus it has been demonstrated that "personality, motivation, status and small-group interactions have no place in Dunlop's system ... Dunlop is silent on these complexities of human behaviour". (Shimmin and Singh 1973: 38).

Dunlop (1950) in a discussion paper classifies three different levels of industrial relations behaviour; collective bargaining, the operations of management and of union organisations, and the conduct of individual workers in the work situation. Dunlop suggests that theorists should focus most of their attention on the first and second levels. However, he does not deny the relevance of the third level. Indeed he argues that "it is precisely in the area of the relation of individuals to organisations that it is hoped that disciplines like sociology and psychology have a contribution to make to industrial relations. There are very large gaps to be filled". (1950: 391)

Flanders in his development of industrial relations theory has taken a much stronger line:

"Personal, or in the language of sociology 'unstructured' relationships have their importance for management and workers, but they lie outside the scope of a system of industrial relations". (1965). The result of these views is that most systems approaches have "tended to suggest a structural determinism in relation to the behaviour of the actors within the system" (Fatchett and Whittingham 1976). Yet it may be argued that it is this very level that is crucially important to any discussion of power in industrial relations. This is supported by the increase in studies at this level which make use of the concept

of power as an explanatory variable. (Marchington 1975a, 1975b; Poole 1974, 1976; Partridge 1975, 1976 and Batstone, Boraston and Frenkel 1977).

At this point it is appropriate to summarise the argument so far presented. It is suggested that the systems approaches (widely construed) have inherently within them certain ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions and stances. These will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter. It is then argued that these assumptions and stances, rather than advancing the understanding of industrial relations phenomena, have in fact tended to obscure and hinder such understanding. This is particularly true in relation to the understanding of power in industrial relations which occupies the position of a totally neglected concept.

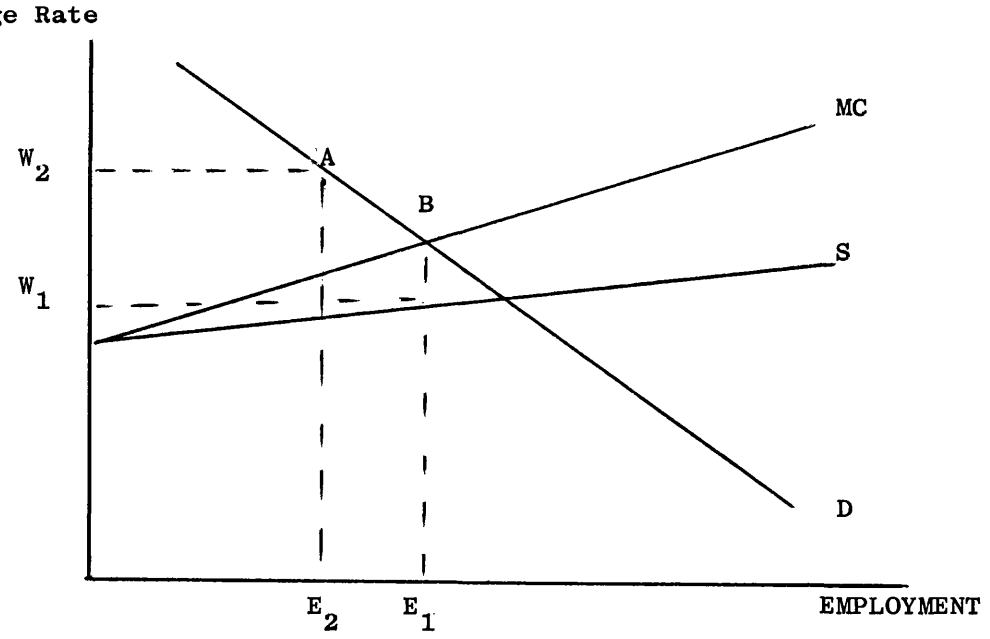
2.7 The action theory model

Schienstock (1981) suggests that it is very difficult to identify a uniform action theory model. However it is possible to delineate two main areas of analysis. The first concerns the "analysis of the decision situation of the various actors" (1981: 174) and for the purposes of this chapter we will focus upon economic bargaining theory and the concept of bargaining power derived from it. The second area concerns the analysis of interaction. Schienstock is not the only theorist to have focused upon the action theory model. Somers (1969) has suggested that the concepts of exchange and interaction should form the basis of a theory of industrial relations and focuses upon the notion of bargaining power. Somers suggests that relations at the workplace should be viewed as an exchange conditioned by relative bargaining power. Thus,

"Management and labour will attempt to achieve these necessary exchanges on the best possible terms for themselves. Their success in doing so will depend on their relative bargaining power; and the rules, decisions and agreements which govern their relationship will be a reflection of their relative bargaining power in the exchange negotiations". (1969: 48)

In order to consider how this strand of industrial relations theory has conceptualised power we can review the development of economic bargaining theory. Traditional or classical economic theory contracted on the notion of a 'contract-zone' or a 'range of indeterminateness'. In Figure 2.6, D is the employer's labour demand curve, while S and MC are his labour supply and marginal cost curves.

Figure 2.6 The contract zone under bilateral monopsony



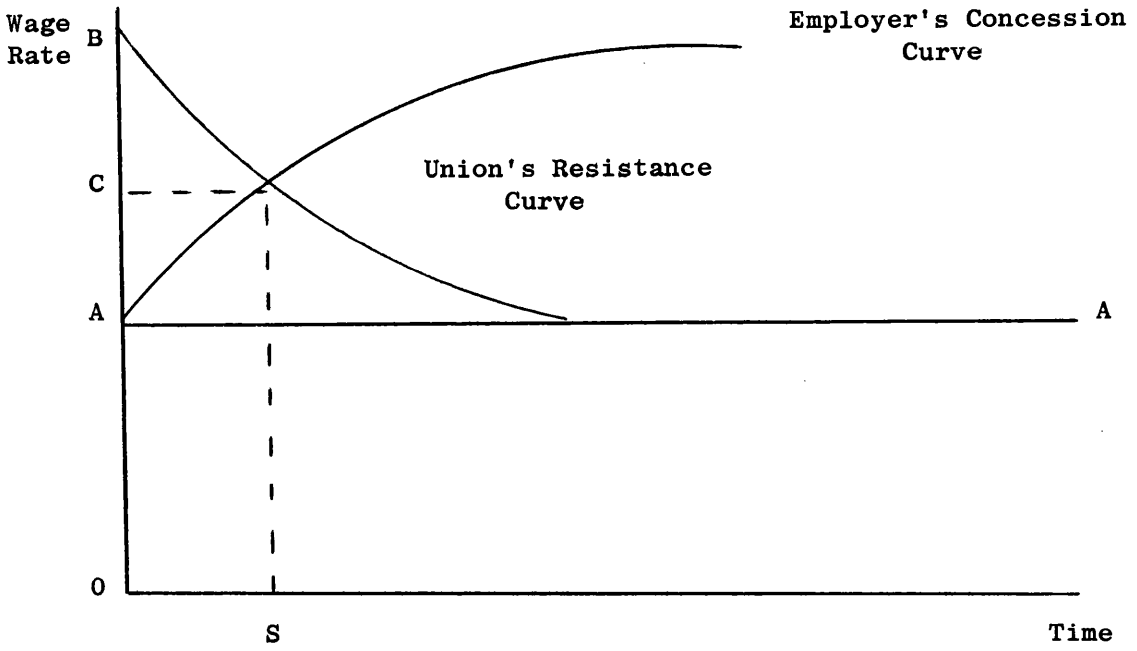
If we assume profit maximisation then the employer will operate at point B where the marginal cost of additional labour equals the marginal revenue product of that labour (as shown by the demand curve). From the

supply curve it can be seen that this will result in the employment of E_1 workers at wage rate W_1. However given that the unions may have other 'poltical' considerations they may develop a preferred wage of W_2. Thus W_1 and W_2 form the basis of the 'contract zone' and the final wage rate decided will be between these two points. The contract zone is often referred to as 'the range of indeterminateness' because within the outer limits the actual wage rate to be finally agreed between the parties is indeterminate. Thus the final rate depends upon non economic factors including the behaviour patterns and attitudes of the bargaining parties. As Schienstock argues,

"It is precisely here, in this assumption that wage regulation is socially influenceable and is ultimately explicable by way of an analysis of the behaviour of the various actors, that the theory of the bilateral monopoly becomes significant for an action theory approach to industrial relations". (1981: 174)

The Hicks (1932) theory of wages is an attempt to improve upon the classical theory and its indeterminateness. In Hick's theory the readiness of the trade union to maintain industrial peace replaces labour as the essential object of bargaining. His central notion is that there is a relationship between the wage that the parties will accept and the length of strike that would be necessary to establish that wage.

Figure 2.7 Hick's theory of wages



Thus in Figure 2.7 A is the wage that the employer would prefer to pay. However, he will concede more to avoid a strike and the size of his concession is partially related to the anticipated length of any threatened strike. This gives us the employer's concession curve. The wage desired by the union is B but they will be willing to take less in order to avoid the costs of a stoppage. This is represented by the union's resistance curve. Thus in Figure 2.7 both parties would agree to wage rate C rather than face a strike of S weeks in length. However there are problems with this approach. It assumes that there is perfect knowledge and that the parties agree on the probable length of any strike. Thus the theory ignores the prevalence of uncertainty in collective bargaining. Alternatively, the theory can be considered as a post hoc description of the history of a strike in which case it appears to be of limited utility.

Several authors have attempted to improve upon or refine the Hicksian theory. Here we shall concentrate on those who have developed notions of bargaining power.

Chamberlain (1951) sought to broaden the concept of power implicit in the Hicksian theory. He therefore defines the,

"bargaining power (of A, let us say) as being the cost to B of disagreeing on A's terms relative to the cost of agreeing on A's terms. (1951: 220-221)

This definition can then be applied to consider the power of B. Thus it may be stated that,

"if the cost to B of disagreeing on A's terms is greater than the cost of agreeing on A's terms, while the cost to A of disagreeing on B's terms is less than the cost of agreeing on B's terms then A's bargaining power is greater than that of B". (1951: 221)

This notion of power has been developed by Levinson in the form of two ratios of 'costs' to the parties. They are as follows;

$$\text{"Bargaining Power of A} = \frac{\text{The costs to B of disagreement with A's terms}}{\text{The costs to B of agreement with A's terms}}$$

and conversely

$$\text{Bargaining Power of B} = \frac{\text{The costs to A of disagreement with B's terms}}{\text{The costs to A of agreement with B's terms" (1966:8)}}$$

Chamberlain's model of bargaining power can be seen to be a definite improvement upon the previous theories of bargaining power. The amount of power possessed by each party is variable and dependent upon the tactics adopted by the other party, the passage of time and the nature of the demands made. It also takes into account, not only the threat to strike or the resistance of the parties, but also the wider economic, political and social influences in so far as these affect the costs of agreement or disagreement.

This concept of power, originating in economics, has become fairly standard, although taken for granted, in the industrial relations literature especially amongst those who concentrate upon the bargaining process. To reiterate the argument advanced in this section; it has been suggested that there exists a distinctive action theory model of industrial relations. This approach,

"... examines the question as to how bargaining based regulation processes in industrial relations proceed and the extent to which the contending parties are in a position to realise their respective objectives within the framework of a collective regulation of work". (Schienstock 1981: 184)

One aspect of this theoretical development has been the emergence of a notion of bargaining power.

However as we have seen the notions of power implicit in both traditional economic theory and the Hicksian approach are open to criticism. While the developments of Chamberlain and Levinson are considerable improvements, they are not above criticism. Firstly, by focusing on a diadic relationship the theory ignores, and cannot cope with, complex power structures. Secondly it measures power at a specific point in time in a specific situation and therefore cannot easily cope with the processual nature of power. The theory does not appear to take much account of interpersonal or persuasive power although this is mentioned by Walton and McKensie (1965). Finally this approach to power explains power by reference to the resources possessed by each party which enable costs to be inflicted on the other, but does not explain the prior distribution of such resources.

2.8 The unionist and pluralist frames of reference

The second major strand of industrial relations orthodoxy can be said to be the ideology of pluralism. Its use in industrial relations is developed from its use in political science and its centrality in the so-called 'Community Power Debate'. Pluralism was introduced to industrial relations in a coherent manner by Fox (1966) who was interested in the use of ideology as a tool of industrial relations reform. In the Royal Commission Research Paper 3, Fox argues that the 'unitary' ideology, held by many managers and enshrined in many managerial theories, was not a realistic ideology for industrial relations as it denied the legitimacy and even existence of deep seated conflict and resisted the roles of trade unions and the process of joint regulation. He instead advocated the adoption of a 'pluralist' approach which would recognise the existence of conflict and rival power groups within the industrial enterprise. In general terms, pluralism refers to a system where decision-making is a result of conflict and compromises between a plurality of different interest groups. This view stands in contradistinction to the elitist or sovereignty views which suggest that a single group or individual exists in the system whose decisions are definitive because of the power superiority that they possess. In the industrial setting, 'pluralist' managements are seen as 'balancing' the 'coalition' of interest groups that have a 'stake' in the organisation.

In developing the pluralist frame of reference Fox has argued that,

"full acceptance of the notion that an industrial organisation is made up of sectional groups with divergent interests involves also a full acceptance of the fact that the degree of common purpose which can exist in industry is only of a very limited nature.

In the sense that the groups are mutually dependent they may be said to have a common interest in the survival of the whole of which they are parts. But this is essentially a remote long-term consideration which enters little into the day-to-day conduct of the organisation and cannot provide that harmony of operational objectives and methods for which managers naturally yearn". (1966: 4)

Thus whereas the unitary frame of reference views conflict as illegitimate or a temporary remedial phenomena, the pluralist approach places conflict at the very heart of industrial relations. Therefore, conflict is an inevitable and essential feature of industrial organisation. However the conflict between the interest groups only takes place within certain limits. It should not be allowed to threaten the very existence of the system so that, despite their conflicting objectives the parties must have certain common goals. This view mirrors Dunlop's use of the concept of ideology. While the actors in the industrial relations system are seen as having differing ideologies, they must possess a certain consensual ideology in relation to the continuous existence of the present industrial relations system.

As we have already briefly mentioned, there are connections between the theoretical and methodological approaches to industrial relations on the one hand and the ideological perspectives on the other. Thus it is possible to argue that the systems theories of industrial relations including the 'Oxford School' are firmly located within the pluralist frame of reference. It is possible to demonstrate that Dunlop is firmly located in this pluralist tradition not only because of his ideas in "Industrial Relations Systems" but also in view of his work on 'pluralistic' industrialism' with Clark Kerr et al (Kerr,

Dunlop, Harbison and Myers 1964). One of the leading members of the 'Oxford School' has put forward a defence of pluralist (Clegg 1975) and of course Fox himself as a member of the 'Oxford School' was the initial exponent of the pluralist frame of reference (Fox 1966). Since then Fox has changed his views and adopted a 'radical' frame of reference and criticised pluralism in several works (Fox 1973, 1974a, 1974b). However, it has been suggested by Wood and Elliot (1977) that Fox does not actually embrace a fully radical stance and that his recent work represents, not a break with pluralism, but a re-working of the concept. It may be argued that the 'Oxford School' is characterised much more by its ideological commitment to pluralism than by its theoretical alignment to systems theory. Finally the action theory of industrial relations containing elements of both exchange theory and interaction theory may be argued to be located, implicitly rather than explicitly, within the pluralist tradition.

The concept of power can thus be seen to be of central importance to the pluralist frame of reference. As Fox has argued,

"pluralism is often associated with a belief that there can and should be, or indeed even is, a balance of power as between the principal interest groups of society". (1973: 307)

Or as Wrong has suggested:

"The various conceptions of 'pluralism' in contemporary sociology and political science are models of systems of intercursive power relations". (1968: 47)

Intercursive power relations are those characterised by a balance of power where the power of each party is 'countervailed' by that of

the other. While this can be said to form the 'strong' view of pluralism there also exists a 'weaker' variant. This argues that each actor may have a different amount of power on a specific issue and that the power of the actors will vary from issue to issue. However some actors may be more 'powerful' than others as long as in the long term no actor is totally subordinated or dominated. Critics of the 'strong' thesis of pluralism such as Fox (1973) and Hyman (1975) have themselves been criticised for mistaking the pluralist assumption of equilibrium of power for equality of power. Regardless of the 'correct' reading of pluralism, it can be seen that power is of crucial importance to the ideology. Burrell and Morgan (1979) provide a useful summary of the unitary and pluralist frames of reference in the following table.

Figure 2.8 The unitary and pluralist views of interests, conflict and power

	The unitary view	The pluralist view
Interests	Places emphasis upon the achievement of common objectives. The organisation is viewed as being united under the umbrella of common goals, and striving towards their achievement in the manner of a well integrated team.	Places emphasis upon the diversity of individual and group interests. The organisation is regarded as a loose coalition which has but a remote interest in the formal goals of the organisation.
Conflict	Regards conflict as a rare and transient phenomenon which can be removed	Regards conflict as an inherent and ineradicable characteristic of

	The unitary view	The pluralist view
Conflict Cont.	through appropriate managerial action. Where it does arise it is usually attributed to the activities of deviants and troublemakers.	organisational affairs and stresses its potentially positive or functional aspects
Power	Largely ignores the role of power in organisational life. Concepts such as authority leadership and control tend to be preferred means of describing the managerial prerogative of guiding the organisation towards the achievement of common interests.	Regards power as a variable crucial to the understanding of the activities of the organisation. Power is the medium through which conflicts of interest are alleviated and resolved. The organisation is viewed as a plurality of power holders drawing their power from a plurality of sources.

Source: Burrell and Morgan (1979:204)

Yet, despite this central significance, the concept of power has been largely ignored or taken-for-granted by most pluralists in industrial relations. In the leading 'pluralist' text on the subject (Clegg 1970, 1979) power is not included in the index and although in the 1979 book there is a section on 'Power in Bargaining', the actual concept of power being used remain stubbornly unexplicated. It should not be assumed that this is an oversight or minor lapse. As Hymen has noted, Clegg's,

"theoretical presuppositions - which reflect the empiricist-pluralist school long predominant in British academic writing on industrial relations - are not explicitly stated". (1975: 205)

While they are not explicit, they are not excluded,

"they are merely hidden below the surface ... certain criteria of selection are applied which are not made explicit and are therefore shielded from criticism". (1975: 10)

Thus the concept of power remains largely problematic and equivocal in pluralist industrial relations.

2.9 The Marxist or radical theory

Whilst the systems approaches and the pluralist frame of reference have together constituted the dominent orthodoxy of industrial relations, the Marxist or 'radical' theories have been seen as the genesis of a 'new' industrial relations. However despite their similarities there are differences between the radical frame of reference on the one hand and Marxist industrial relations on the other.

The radical frame of reference or perspective was initially developed in reaction to, and during the critique of, the prevailing pluralist orthodoxy. Perhaps the most famous example is the work of Fox (1973). While recognising the pluralist portrayal of a balance of power and a situation of 'checks and balances' as being useful to describe certain phenomena, he argues that it confuses our understanding of society and industrial relations since,

"it obscures the domination of society by its ruling strata through institutions and assumptions which operate to exclude anything approaching a genuine power balance". (1973: 309)

Thus society is more convincingly described,

"in terms of the over-arching exploitation of one class by another, of the propertyless by the propertied, of the less by the more powerful". (1973: 308-309)

Within this situation the pluralist ideology, which seeks to portray the dominant class as just another interest group, becomes an ideological tool of the subordination and legitimation used semi-purposively to condition the subordinate class into accepting the status quo.

Fox argues that society is characterised, not by a power balance or equilibrium, but by the presence of a great disparity of power between the owners and managers of economic resources and those who depend upon those economic resources for their livelihood. The fact that the elite class do not wish to acknowledge this situation is not surprising. However the greater majority of the subordinated class either do not perceive the situation in these terms or legitimate the position of the elite class. This leads Fox to make some further points. Firstly the dominant class very rarely need to exert openly the full force of the power available to them. In this statement Fox is adopting a view of power as 'capacity'. Power can be possessed over time as the property of an individual or a group and remains 'latent' until a situation arises where the power needs to be 'exercised'. Fox also tentatively suggests that the existence of a large power imbalance can, of itself, prevent any challenges to that power emerging.

Another reason why the dominant class rarely need to utilise their power in an obvious manner is that,

"all the social institutions, mechanisms, and principles which it is crucially important for them to have accepted and legitimised are accepted and legitimised already and come under no serious threat". (1973: 311)

This legitimation exists because,

"their very power affords them the facilities for creating and maintaining social attitudes and values favourable to that acceptance". (1973: 311)

This notion of power is similar to the three-dimensional approach advanced by Lukes (1974).

In the industrial relations sphere, Fox argues (against his previous pluralist position), that to view collective bargaining as a means of normative adjustment between competing groups with a rough power balance is mistaken. Any adjustments are only marginal and are conditional.

"upon the interest groups concerned being prepared to accept as given those major structural features which are crucial for the power, status, and rewards of the owners and controllers". (1973: 219)

Thus Fox sees collective bargaining as 'shaping' or 'filtering out' conflicts which could threaten the major structural features of domination.

It has been suggested by Wood and Elliot (1977) that while Fox's radical stance represents a move away from the pluralist perspective, it does not constitute a total break with it or a full acceptance of a Marxist approach despite Fox's use of the term. It is to the Marxist approach to industrial relations that we now turn our attention. It is not possible, or appropriate, in a work of this nature to attempt a full analysis of the Marxist position or a description of Marxist theory. However, in order to discuss the position and use of power in Marxist analyses of industrial relations, a brief resume of the Marxist position will be presented.

The Marxist approach assumes that structure and form of industrial relations at any given time are the outcome of a power conflict between the forces of capital and labour. Thus industrial relations are in essence market relations. The Marxist approach focuses on the historical development of the power conflict between Capital and Labour and thus conflict and change form essential parts of any Marxian analysis. The Marxist perspective views capitalists and workers; the buyers and sellers of labour, as standing in an antangonistic unequal exchange relationship. Workers are forced to sell their 'labour power' as a commodity on the labour market in exchange for the financial means of survival. To them the 'labour' is worthless until it is combined with the means of production. However as the means of production are controlled by the capitalists, workers can only utilise their labour by selling it. The wage rate thus becomes the focus of the conflicting interests of the two parties. While, the capitalist seeks to increase the 'surplus value' that he receives by keeping the wage rate low, the worker seeks to raise the wage rate in order to try and obtain the full value of the services that he renders.

Moreover this exchange relationship is characterised by an asymmetrical distribution of power because the individual worker faces the capitalist as a representative of a collective force.

This unequal power relationship is seen as having other implications besides the wage rate. Thus the worker is seen as having to subject himself to the domination and 'control' of the capitalist. One of the possible results of this situation is the 'alienation' of the worker. Trade unions are seen as an attempt by workers to redress the balance of power viz a viz the owners of the means of production. Yet it may be argued that,

"Trade unionism has failed to have any substantial impact on the power relationships governing the labour market and in-firm processes because the power basis of the capitalists, namely, their ownership of the means of production, is not thereby diminished". (Schienstock 1981: 182)

Against the argument that trade unions have in fact increased their power and their role in the economic and industrial relations systems, it may be suggested that,

"it is precisely this increasing integration into society which casts doubt upon the validity of any view of the role of trade unions as the critical force in the abolition of the capitalist system". (Schienstock 1981: 182)

Finally the Marxist approach assumes that the State is not a neutral body as supposed in pluralist theory but instead operates to preserve the dominance of the capitalist class.

In order to summarise this brief exposition of the Marxist approach, it is worth quoting again from Schienstock.

"The Marxist position investigates the question as to which power positions capital and labour hold in the conflict over the structures of industrial labour and how far the organised working class has advanced in its struggle for the abolition of a situation in which they as wage workers are obliged to accept conditions dictated by others". (1981: 184)

Given, then, the centrality of power in the Marxist tradition, how have theorists of this perspective in the field of industrial relations utilised the concept? To find the answer to this question we can turn to the work of Richard Hyman as an example. Hyman has attempted to produce an explicitly Marxist perspective on industrial relations in his text-book; "Industrial Relations: A Marxist Introduction". (1975). The problems of simultaneously trying to develop a new framework while writing for the general reader in this fashion have been the subject of criticism by Wood (1976) and Hyman's work therefore needs to be treated cautiously.

Starting from a critique of the systems approach and the focus on job regulation of the 'Oxford School' Hyman proceeds to offer his own definition of industrial relations. Thus, "industrial relations is the study of processes of control over work relations". (1975: 12). Yet despite the importance of control in this definition Hyman pays little attention to the concept. He mentions the notion of the 'frontier of control' but fails to develop this and nowhere does he really discuss the different forms of control which he hints at in a footnote to his definition.

What then, of his treatment of power? He argues in his first chapter that "an increasing power struggle is ... a central feature of industrial relations" (1975: 26) and defines power as the "ability of an individual or group to control his (their) physical and social environment" (1975: 26) as a sub-process, the "ability to influence the decisions which are are are not taken by others". (1975: 26)

Power is thus seen as the result of a power 'base' which is related to a control over certain material resources. But Hyman also acknowledges that the control of ideological resources can be a source of power, whereby the dominant class are able to shape and mould attitudes and values so as to ensure that challenges to their position are unlikely to occur.

In this he is very close in the three dimensional position of Lukes (1974). As Hyman argues,

"the ability to overcome opposition is one sign of power; but a more subtle yet perhaps even more significant form of power is the ability to preclude opposition from even arising-simply because, for example, those subject to a particular type of control do not question its legitimacy or can see no alternative". (1975: 26)

Hyman also distinguishes between 'power for' where power is seen primarily as a "resource used in the service of collective interests" (1975: 26) and 'power over' where an individual or group wields power over others.

Finally during his discussion of the role of the State in industrial relations, Hyman adopts an 'incorporation' thesis.

As part of this thesis he introduces the notion of 'ideological hegemony' derived from Gramsci (1971). This concept is very directly related to his previous notion of power. Hegemony is seen as having two separate but inextricably related parts. Firstly it refers to the dominance in social, cultural and ideological spheres of a particular group in society. Secondly it refers to the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the direction and control of social by the dominant group. The concept of hegemony will be developed later in this thesis.

As we have seen in this section, while the 'radical' and Marxist approaches may have certain theoretical and conceptual differences, it is fair to assert that they both have a similar notion of power. The views of both these approaches to the concepts of interests, conflict and power are summarised in Figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9 The radical and Marxist views of interests, conflict and power

Interests	Places emphasis upon the dichotomous nature and mutual opposition of interests in terms of broad socio-economic divisions of the 'class' type within social formations as a whole, which are also reflected in organisations in the middle range of analysis.
Conflict	Regards conflict as an ubiquitous and disruptive motor force propelling changes in society in general and organisations in particular. It is recognised that conflict may be a suppressed feature of a social system, not always evident at the level of empirical reality.

Power	Regards power as an integral, unequally distributed, zero-sum phenomenon, associated with a general process of social control. Society in general and organisations in particular are seen as being under the control of ruling interest groups which exercise their power through various forms of ideological manipulation, as well as the more visible forms of authority relations.

(From Burrell and Morgan 1979: 338)

This Figure can be compared with Figure 2.8 which illustrates the unitarist and pluralist approaches to the same concepts. It can therefore be seen that the radical/marxist conception of power is similar to the three dimensional approach described by Lukes (1974).

2.10 Power in industrial relations research

Having described the concepts of power used in the various theoretical developments in the subject, we can now turn our attention to the use of power in industrial relations research as monitored in the major journals and research reports. In order to facilitate this objective the two major industrial relations journals (British Journal of Industrial Relations and Industrial Relations Journal) were reviewed from their inception until 1981. What emerged quite clearly from this review was the poucity of articles dealing with power directly or indirectly, either as a topic to be discussed or as a variable for exaplanatory purposes. Even restricting attention to the post 1970 issues one can only identify around 10 articles, from the approximately 400 published, that actually deal with power. These articles can be divided into three rough categories. Firstly these dealing with

'economic power'; secondly those dealing with aspects of control; and finally those of a more general nature.

In the first category falls the work of Buchanan and Gray (1970) who seek to test the union-management conflict of Dubin (1960) by measuring the level of strike activity and the power balance in specific industries. Escheiving any theoretical discussion they develop a Power Index which is a factor,

"reflecting the strength of supply and demand for labour as shown in the annual percentage rate of growth of supply and demand for labour; the annual difference between the two percentages i.e. demand minus supply, (is taken) to indicate a balance of power in favour of labour or management according to which side the net difference (lies)". (1970: 88)

Thus for Buchanan and Gray, power at the industry level is to be measured operationally by the proxy variable of the supply and demand for labour. Power is therefore seen as being related to labour market factors and, indirectly, to product market factors as the demand for labour is a derived demand.

Armstrong, Bowers and Burkitt (1977) also focus upon the area of bargaining power and attempt to evaluate the previous literature. They reject the model advanced by Chamberlain (1951) and modified by Levinson (1966) because of its subjective nature. Thus the parties have to make their own judgements of the relative costs of agreement and disagreement or these costs have to be inferred by an outside observer. They also discuss and evaluate the use of proxy variables for the measurement of trade union power.

These include the rate of change of unionisation and the level or rate of change of strike activity. However these variables are rejected and the authors call for more reliable measures to be developed. In later works Burkitt (1977, 1981) has sought to defend the trade unions from the charge that they are 'too powerful' or 'more powerful than management'. Adopting an unacknowledged semi-Marxist position Burkitt seeks to argue that most unorganised labour markets are characterised by "some degree of employer dominance". (1977: 17) because of the individual position of the worker in relation to the forces of capital. Thus unions "are at most a countervailing force generated by the employers' bargaining strength" (1977: 17). Therefore Burkitt seeks to distinguish between the surface level of power 'balances' and 'checks' as illustrated in collective bargaining and the deeper more structural nature of domination by employers and Capital. In the course of his argument, and in order to demonstrate the deficiencies of the 'over-might trade unions' thesis, Burkitt re-examines the concept of 'economic power'. He suggests that the traditional view of power being derived from the ability of the parties to impose costs upon each other is only one form of power. Thus,

"power derives not only from collective organisation imposing costs upon other parties, but also from acquisitive ability within markets measured by the rewards that individuals can obtain when acting independently ... Power resides in anonymous social institutions as well as in identifiable individuals and groups, and derives more from the routine application of effectively unchallenged assumptions than from domination after public conflict". (1981: 68)

Burkitt then offers a new definition of economic power as,

"the aggregation of influences determining the pressure that individuals and groups can exert, so that the earnings capacity of claims arising from property rights becomes crucial, whatever the degree of organisation in the market where they are exercised". (1981: 68)

It may be argued therefore, that Burkitt is adopting a 'three-dimensional' view of power very similar to the views advanced by Lukes (1974), Hyman (1975) and Fox (1973, 1974).

The number of articles dealing with the 'control' aspects of power is rather small. William Brown in 'A Consideration of Custom and Practice' (1972) does not explicitly define power but in the course of his analysis power is seen as the ability of workers or workgroups to dispute mangerial prerogative by use of custom and practice. Ramsay (1980) recognises that participation and worker control concerns decision making processes and thus that any meaningful attempt to analyse participation must consider the nature of power. However neither author actually develops the concepts of power any further.

Finally we need to consider the work of Hill (1974) and Leijnse (1980). Hill identifies power position as being one of the four major variables in the explanation of workgroup activity and identifies several possible sources of workgroup power. He suggests that workgroups can derive power from their position in the production process; from the nature of the product market that their organisation is located in and from managerial structure and policy. Leijnse identifies the concept of a 'transfer of power' which means the process by which an organisation uses its power base on a particular bargaining level to strengthen its bargaining position on a higher level.

Thus Leijnse holds an implicit view of power as existing on a series of levels. He seeks to examine whether power on the shop floor derived from structural position or scarcity of skills can be utilised by transfer to the meso or macro levels to improve the position of all workers. Leijnse uses a modified version of Dahl's notion of power. Thus,

"power is the possibility to delimit the behaviour of alternatives of a person or group in accordance with the goals of another person or group". (Leijnse 1980: 67)

While the above works all recognise the importance of power, they all adopt inevitably a notion of power derived from a different tradition of power theorising and fail fully to develop or explicate the concepts of power that they are using. However there are some recent works which explicitly focus upon power in the workplace and attempt to develop concepts of power which would aid our understanding of industrial relations processes at this level. Thus we can examine and evaluate the work of Marchington (1975a, 1975b), Poole (1976) and Edwards (1975, 1978).

Marchington in his development of a model of workgroup power generation uses a notion of power which is partially derived from the behaviouralist tradition of Dahl and partially from the exchange tradition. Thus management and individual workgroups are seen to be in a power-dependence exchange relationship which continues over time. Marchington, however, introduces the concept of perception or awareness of the other party's need into the analysis. Thus his conceptualisation includes A's realisation of B's need for the thing A possesses. He suggests that:

"A's power over B is;

1) a function of B's need of the thing,
2) a function of B's ability to acquire the thing outside the A-B relation,
3) a function of A's awareness of the degree to which B desires the thing and,
4) a function of B's perception of A's awareness". (1975a: 4)

Marchington also argues that power can refer to capacity as well as exercise. In this he appears to be following Bachrach and Baratz and Lukes rather than Dahl.

Utilising this notion of power, Marchington proceeds to develop a 'path model' of workgroup power. He suggests that workgroup power may be viewed as a process of several distinct but related phases. The first phase in the path model concerns the 'power capacity' that any workgroup may possess. This power capacity is derived from structural factors relating to the dependence of other parties (other workgroups and especially management) on that workgroup for the provision of vital services. The next step in the path model is the phase of 'power realisation'. This is the realisation by the workgroup that it possesses a certain power capacity. A correct realisation of low power capacity would halt the model at this point. However the correct realisation of high power capacity can lead to the third phase of the model; 'power testing', where the workgroup tests its perception of its own power capacity by some form of action. This will result in the final phase of the model, which is a 'power outcome' of an unsuccessful or successful nature.

In a later paper Marchington expands upon the concept of power capacity; the first stage in the path model. (1975b). In this he relies extensively on the strategic contingencies theory of sub-unit power developed by Hickson and his colleagues. Marchington attempts to transpose their ideas into the industrial relations context. Thus he suggests that their four main variables (coping with uncertainty, substitutability, workflow pervasiveness and workflow immediacy) can be grouped into two main factors. The first, Disruption (workflow pervasiveness and immediacy) refers to the ability of the workgroup to halt production. This is a measure of short term power capacity. The second, Replaceability (substitutability and coping with uncertainty) is related to the ability of the workgroup to increase indispensibility. This is a measure of long-term power capacity. It is, of course, possible at this stage to develop more or less simple operational indices for these factors in the industrial relations context. The result of this type of analysis is a form of power capacity league table where workgroups are ranked according to their combined scores on the two main factors. This ranking can then be compared with indices of instances of power testing or power outcomes to further develop the model.

It should be noted that Marchington suggests that the path model is a tentative development needing more research. He notes that the power capacity phase is concerned mainly with structural factors, while the later phases can only be explained in terms of consciousness factors. This inevitably involves a different type of methodology and research. Indeed, Marchington agrees with Hyman when he argues that what is needed is a 'structural dialectic of social structure and social consciousness". (1972: 72)

Marchington's model is interesting as it recognises the action/ structure dichotomy that we have already discussed. Yet it fails to follow up this insight and concentrates upon structural factors alone. As Marchington's theory of power is extensively based upon the strategic contingencies approach it is therefore open to the same criticisms that were voiced earlier in this Chapter.

One particular criticism relates to the adoption of the workgroup as the appropriate level of analysis and its validity in all situations. This will be discussed in more detail later in this work. However the major criticism is that Marchington's model relates power to structural position and yet ignores the origins of that structure and the processes which created it.

Poole's attempt at a power analysis of workplace labour relations is tantalising in that it suggests several important ideas yet ultimately falls back upon an analysis which is inadequate. Poole chooses the workplace rather than the workgroup as his level of analysis. He notes the recent increase in the use of power as a major explanatory variable in workplace industrial relations and also the problems of theory and operationalisation associated with the concept. Indeed he argues that a common deficiency of all previous approaches,

"has been that the gulf between theoretical and operational issues has remained difficult to bridge and, above all, that the principle theoretical arguments have been frequently unrelated to classical formulations of this concept". (1976: 31)

Unfortunately in his desire to construct operational indicators, Poole neglects to make explicit his theoretical definition of power.

He does inform the reader that it is a "general notion of power" (1976: 31) and that his approach is an improvement over the "so-called issue and reputational techniques which are the principle approaches to power measurements". (1976: 33). Yet his notion of power remains stubbornly unexplicated. At several points in his analysis he appears almost implicitly to adopt a two or three dimensional approach to power especially during his discussion of Marx and Weber and during his critique of the issue and reputational approaches. However despite these insights Poole falls back upon a theory of power which is behavioural and one-dimensional in nature, focusing upon decision making and outcomes and utilising the notion of power resource bases.

Thus Poole identifies three dimensions of power;

"first, the exercise of power in industrial relationships; second, the underlying or latent, bases or sources of power which may have ultimate roots in general economic and technological structures; and third, at a level of values, the beliefs, orientations and perspectives of the partners to industrial relations in so far as these affect the stability or otherwise of particular distributions of power". (1976: 32)

He also identifies three major issues in the actual exercise of management - trade union relations which are considered important. These issues are,

"the levels at which decision making takes place, the ranges and scope of issues influenced by the respective parties, and the outcome of particular power conflicts in which sanctions are employed". (1976: 33)

It is interesting to compare the dimensions of power specified by Poole and the phases in the path model mentioned by Marchington (see Figure 2.10). Both authors appear to use different terminology to describe similar concepts. Thus Pooles 'latent power' and Marchingtons' 'power capacity' both refer to the notion of power as potentiality. The concepts of 'power realisation' (Marchington) and 'values' (Poole) are concerned with the effect on power of consciousness factors. Both authors also use the notion of a separate 'exercise' of power. Thus they both appear to subscribe to the use of a dialectic of social structure and social consciousness. However Marchingtons path model is focused on sub-units or workgroups, While Poole concentrates on the level of the workplace or workforce and especially on unionisation as an important variable.

Figure 2.10 A comparison of the models of Marchington and Poole

Marchington-Path model of power	Poole-Dimensions of power
1) Power capacity	a) Latent power (Bases of power)
2) Power realisation	b) Values (beliefs, orientations)
3) Power testing	
4) Power outcome	c) Exercise of power

Despite his intention of constructing operational indicators in line with theoretical ideas in the mainstream of sociological theory, it may, in fact, be argued that his operationalisation of latent power is rather weak precisely because he relies upon Bienstedt (1950), who is essentially a political scientist, for his operational framework, rather than the purely sociological literature. Bienstedt's variables (numbers, organisation and resources), while applicable and appropriate

to analyses of pressure group power or social power, are not exactly compatible with the industrial relations context, despite Poole's insistence. These variables force the researcher to concentrate upon the formal structure of power which in the case of industrial relations translates into a focus upon trade unions and their officials and formal systems of collective bargaining. Therefore in an attempt to operationalise his concept of latent power, Poole uses completeness of unionisation (as a measure of numbers), average constituency of shop stewards (for organisation) and factors such as size of the national union (for resources). Poole uses two different indices for his variable of values. Firstly the willingness of the workforce to challenge or sanction managerial decision-making and secondly, the degree of militancy considered by the workforce in the pursuance of trade union aims.

Poole can also be criticised for his choice of indices. In the case of latent power, they exclusively concentrate upon trade unions and the formal structure of power which divests attention from the power possessed by non unionised workforces or workgroups and actors outside the formal power structure. His use of simple either/or scales is also limiting. For example he scores workplaces either 'plus' or 'minus' depending upon whether they are 100% unionised or not.

It can now be suggested that both of the above analyses of power in workplace labour relations are inadequate and only partial in their coverage. Both Marchington and Poole are crucially concerned with the development of operational indices designed to represent the various facets of power. The result of this concentration on the empirical is a subsequent neglect of the theoretical base of power.

Both authors use content to utilise a specific definition of power, derived from a particular tradition, in a largely uncritical manner.

Marchington's definition of power is derived from the exchange tradition. He links this with the idea of power as the control of 'strategic contingencies' which is derived from Hickson and his colleagues. Discussion of the definition of power by Poole is rather brief. He commences with the definition from Weber but instead of pursuing this fruitful line of thought he moves away into the behaviouralist tradition. Thus his indices of the dimensions of power focus on decision-making and the resolution of issues, while for his indices of latent power he uses notions derived from the political science tradition. In spite of this Poole suggests that his indices are an improvement upon those used by the traditional 'issue' and 'reputational' techniques. While they are certainly different, they are still located within the same tradition. It is suggested that because of their adoption of a single tradition of power both Marchington and Poole have failed to fully explicate the concept of power and account for some of its occurrences in the workplace.

In some ways Marchington's choice of exchange power and strategic contingencies theory as the basis of his model is quite appropriate. Exchange power assumes the creation of dependencies through the conferring of benefits in a pre-existing continuous relationship between the parties. This description appears to characterise management-union /worker relationships quite well. The strategic contingencies theory elaborates upon the notion of dependancy and enables the researcher to focus on sub-units such as the workgroup. However these views of power have some unintended results. Power comes to be seen as totally

related to structure which is unexplicated. Thus Marchington attributes power to workgroups according to their position in the organisation. This ignores any discussion of the origins of this structural arrangement. This situation can be rectified by studying the 'power' needed by certain workgroups to achieve this current 'powerful' position in the organisation. The researcher also needs to study the reciprocal power of management in their ability to structure and control the situation through their 'power' to set the 'rules of the game'. These concerns are largely ignored by Marchington.

Marchington's use of exchange power is compatible with those theorists who assume that for power to be exercised a conflict of interests must exist between parties. All exchange may be characterised as antagonistic because each party is assumed to be maximising their own benefits from the exchange relationship. This is a fairly typical characterisation of management - union/worker relations. However this definition of power does exclude the situation where a shop steward is said to be 'powerful' because of his ability to further the interests of his members. This situation does not imply a conflict of interests and seems a valid form of power. More generally, Marchington's use of exchange power and its concentration on social relationships precludes any analysis of personal power vested in individuals whether involving a conflict of interests or not.

Poole's concentration upon observable 'issues' or 'disputes' leaves him open to the criticisms directed at Dahl by both Bachrach and Baratz and also Lukes. Power can be exercised in situations where one party acts to limit the scope of decision-making so that only issues that are 'safe' to him actually arise.

This is the process of 'mobilisation of bias' or 'non-decision' making. Management may, for example, be able to restrict the type of issues that arise in participation machinery to those that do not threaten them. Thus the concentration on observable issues leads to a 'one-dimensional' view of power.

One problem that affects both authors' theories of power is the question of potentiality. This refers to the situation where A makes no attempt to alter the behaviour of B but may still be said to possess power. Thus, for example, a workgroup may simply not need or not choose to take action to alter the behaviour of management. Similarly, the formal structure of rights and obligations may ensure, for management, compliance by workers without recourse to action. This notion of potentiality is mirrored by Marchington's power capacity and Poole's latent power. The notion of power potential necessitates the related concept of the exercise of power. This view of potentiality conflicts with the exchange tradition used by Marchington. Potential power does not necessarily imply any pre-existing relationship or exchange between the parties. Thus power is seen as an individualistic conception rather than as the property of a social relationship. The notion of potentiality is also extremely important. Using this notion, the lack of exercise of power by an elite group can be explained by the possession of high potential power (as in situations of domination or hegemony) rather than in terms of the absence of power.

A final example of research into power in the workplace setting is provided by the work of Edwards et al (Edwards and Harper 1975, Edwards 1978) which consists of an attempt to apply the notions of bargaining power and influence developed by Abell (1975) in the industrial

relations setting. Thus the researchers define organisations as bargaining and influence systems and therefore the first stage in the research process involves the identification of bargaining zones. These are defined by Abell and comprising,

"a group of individuals (perhaps representing organisational sub-groups, in other bargaining zones), normatively constrained, but with different objectives, attempting to arrive at collective decisions through a complex process of influence and bargaining". (1975: 17)

Edwards and Harper focus upon the interface between the National Coal Board (NCB) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in a number of collieries. They are then able to identify ten different bargaining zones between these two parties at a variety of different levels. They then proceed to analyse both the relationships between the zones and the communications within the zones between the parties in order to identify the contentious issues.

In a later paper these divisive and contentious issues are examined in detail and two measures of power are applied to them. The first measure is bargaining power which is defined as,

"... the ability of an individual or, group to get his or its own way in the face of others' competing objectives, and is measured by reference to the ability of the colliery manager or NUM representative to get their own way in cases of decisions where the objectives of the two sides are in conflict". (1978: 3)

However by itself this measure is not sufficient, so Edwards develops a second measure termed 'control' which is,

"... based on the manager's and NUM representative's ability to get their own way in the decision making process, regardless of whether the decisions were the subject of the conflict". (1978: 3)

These measures were then applied to the NCB/NUM bargaining zones and were said to successfully analyse and compose the power relations in the management union relationship.

Several criticisms can be made of this approach to power. Firstly the very nature of the definitions forces attention to be paid solely to the formal management - union channels and thus to the formal structure of power. Secondly power is seen in a 'win - lose' manner. Thus the party that 'wins' a decision is accorded power while the party that 'loses' is not. This however ignores the fact that power is a variable concept and ignores the 'sources' or 'bases' of power. Thus power is defined as the ability to 'win' contentious decisions but no explanation is given as to the origins of that power. Therefore while Edwards' work succeeds in mapping out the 'winning' of decisions it fails to explain the origins of power which make such 'winning' possible.

2.11 An evaluation of the use of power in the organisational and industrial relations literature

Having examined the use of the power concept in the literature of organisational theory and industrial relations, we are now in a position to evaluate the extent to which this literature has contributed to our understanding of power in the organisation. Firstly, the organisational literature can be evaluated. As Clegg (1977) puts it,

"If one knew nothing of organisations in our contemporary capitalist society, yet one was willing to absorb what knowledge one could from the existing scholarly texts on the topic, what picture of power would these present?" (1977: 29)

The dominant orthodoxy (Hickson et al 1971, Abell 1975, Pfeffer 1981) views organisations as open 'systems' interacting with their 'environment' which can lead to 'uncertainty'. The organisation is composed of 'sub-units' engaged in a power struggle ('organisational politics') as they attempt to increase their 'control of resources'; increase the 'dependence' of others on them by 'controlling uncertainties'; and ensuring their irreplaceability. At the same time, by the use of various 'political strategies and tactics', the sub-units attempt to affect the decision making process. How useful is this view of power in organisations?

Firstly it may be suggested that this notion of power is predicated upon an organisational theory and literature which is open to criticism. Several writers have argued that much of organisational theory is 'biased' in one way or another. (Clegg 1977, Allen 1975, Burrell and Morgan 1979). Some have argued that organisational theory is 'biased' in that it is partial, one-sided and exists to serve the interests of the 'status quo'. Thus Clegg argues that,

"the texts of organisational theory share a mutual interest with the world they purport to depict. Their explanations are merely glasses which simply serve to reproduce this world. They do not account for this world, nor can they. In their theorising, just as in the theorising that is that organisation that they attend to, these texts exhibit an 'interest'". (1977: 21)

Thus it is argued that organisation theory serves the interest of 'Capital' and the preservation of the system. Because of this it is unable to come to grips with the concept of power. Others such as Burrell and Morgan (1979) have argued that organisational theory is weak because of its attachment to certain epistemological and methodological positions.

Much organisational theory, developing the ideas of Parsons, views power as a deviation from the formal organisational authority structure. This leads to the formal structure of power being taken for granted and not being an area for investigation. Defining the notion of power in this way has important consequences. Thus in Hickson et al (1971) and, to a lesser extent, Pfeffer (1981), the formal vertical structure of power and authority is ignored in favour of a focus on the horizontal power struggle between sub-units. The concentration on deviations from the formal structure and thus on the bases of power possessed by the various sub-units has another problem. It fails to explain why some sub-units or people have access to these resources while others do not. As Clegg has argued, the "prior possession of resources in anything other than equal amounts is something which a theory of 'power' has to explain" (1977: 25). As we have already seen the Strategic Contingencies approach provides an excellent example of such failings, in that it abtracts from discussion the formal power and authority structure and in its treatment of sub-units assumes the power of management.

It may also be argued that the body of organisational theory fails to acknowledge or understand the three-dimensional view of power developed by Lukes (1974). Thus Abell (1975) suggests that power can be analysed

by firstly identifying organisational actors 'initially preferred outcomes' to a decision and then observing the extent to which these can be modified by other actors. Yet Abell fails to appreciate that peoples 'initially preferred outcomes' are in a sense arbitrary. How are we to be sure that they equate with the 'real interests' of the actors, to use Lukes' term? The initial preferred outcome depends on when the researcher begins to observe and the 'history' of the relationship between the actors. It may well be the case that one dominant actor has been able to convince others that his goals are synonymous with and should be, their goals. As Clegg has remarked,

"To the extent that a person's theorising of the possibilities of their existence and participation in an organisation will be circumscribed within the dominant theorising power of the organisation's form of life, then surely a very significant form of power will be the members' inability to see beyond the actuality of presence? In Marcuse's (1964) phrase, they will be one-dimensional men embedded within the unthought consensus of everyday life". (1977: 28)

We have already seen that the notion of a power struggle between sub-units forms one of the basic tenets of theories of power in the dominant tradition of organisational theory. It has been suggested that this assumption of a power struggle fulfils the same purpose as the principle of perfect competition in economics. Thus in organisation theory, as in economics, the system is seen as tending towards an equilibrium which is in fact a taken-for-granted assumption. The effect of this assumption is to generate a view of power which ignores "the theoretically and practically prior conditions for the exercise of power". (1977: 30). Thus this view of powers neglects

the concept of capacity or potential for future action. As Clegg has suggested,

"To abstract this latter concept is to distract our attention from the underlying social relations that grant to some positions in organisations more or less 'capacity' to 'exercise' power than others. Instead it focuses our attention on the 'exercise' after any prior structuring of 'capacity' has occurred. 'Power' is seen simply as the 'exercise' of an 'ability' taken after any accretion at diminution of 'capacity' has occurred". (1977: 30-31)

This view seems to serve the ideological purpose of preserving the status quo as a topic outside the scope of a theory of power.

Turning our attention to the field of industrial relations, it can be seen that relatively little attention has been devoted to the concept of power despite its central position and importance in many of the major theoretical developments in the subject. Thus power is a central, but largely unexplicated, variable in systems theories of industrial relations. Some theorists such as Dunlop (1958) pay virtually no attention to the concept while others such as Craig (1973) attempt a definition but little else. The theorists of the 'Oxford School' see industrial relations as involving the creation of a 'web of rules' through a process of joint regulation which is both economic and political in nature. Yet despite the inclusion of this 'political' dimension, no attention is paid to the concept of power. As we have seen power is central to the second strand of industrial relations orthodoxy; pluralism. Pluralism takes power as a variable crucial to the understanding of activities in the organisation. The organisation is seen as a plurality of power holders

disputing various organisation issues. However even here power remains undefined and unexplicated. Finally the neglect of power can be seen by its absence from the indexes of texts in the subject and from the paucity of articles referring to the concept or using it as an explanatory variable.

A second problem with the concept of power in industrial relations is that some industrial relations theories adopt, uncritically, a tradition of power theorising developed in another discipline. Often the tradition chosen is one which is open to extensive criticism. Thus the bargaining power models are based upon the exchange tradition of power and are thus open to the same criticisms that were levelled at that approach earlier in this work. Similarly Marchington (1975) is engaged in the application of the Strategic Contingencies approach to the industrial relations sphere. Thus his workgroups gain their power from the 'position' that they occupy in the organisation. Their position is related to such factors as their control of resources, control of strategic contingencies and substitutability. Yet Marchington because of his selection of this particular tradition of power theorising is unable to explain the processes by which the present power distribution evolved or to examine beneath the level of surface appearances. In a like manner, Poole (1976) restricts his ability fully to understand the nature of power in the workplace by his dependence on a particular tradition of power theorising. His choice of indices from a political science tradition results in a focus upon the formal aspects of 'pressure group' power and the formal structure. Finally we have seen how the decision making focus of Abell has entered the industrial relations literature via the work of Edwards.

Thus two main comments can be made at this stage. Firstly that the development of the concept of power represents a significant lacuna in the industrial relations literature. Secondly, where attempts have been made to articulate the concept they have generally been less than successful. This can in part, be attributed to their uncritical use of notions of power developed in other disciplines which are themselves unsatisfactory. However the picture is not all bleak. It is possible to see a certain amount of light at the end of the tunnel. In the work of Fox (1973), Hyman (1975), Burkitt (1977), and to a lesser extent Marchington (1975) and Poole (1976), one can see attempts, however partial, to transcend the one-dimensional and behavioural concepts of power and to embrace a more radical three dimensional approach.

Chapter 3

The epistemology and ideology of power

I wish to argue that the theoretical concepts of power contained in the literature are influenced, or even largely determined, by the epistemological and ideological traditions which informed their conception. This is in line with Lukes' view that power is an 'essentially contested' concept in both the theoretical and political arenas. Thus, we may suggest that the notion of power is disorderly because power theorists have made different epistemological assumptions and have adopted different epistemological stances. In addition a theorists's understanding of power is affected by his ideological position. As Lukes has argued, any theory or definition of power is,

"inextricably tied to a given set of (probably unacknowledged) value - assumptions which predetermine the range of its empirical application". (1974: 26)

If we examine the literature, we can see that Weber's understanding of power in its widest sense can be seen to be related to his attempt to develop an 'interpretive sociology'. Thus his definitions of key terms such as 'Macht' and 'Herrschaft' and his conception of domination are all to be seen in the context of his wider epistemological project. In our review of the Community Power debate we demonstrated that the two sides were split largely on the basis of academic discipline. On this basis they adopted different epistemological stances which influenced their utilisation of different methodologies and thus affected their final understanding of power. Finally, it was observed that the use by Dahl of a causal model drawn from classical mechanics led to the adoption of a behaviourist stance and a methodology based upon observable events. This, in turn, influenced and determined his understanding of power.

Similarly, examples can be cited to illustrate the way in which the ideological or political position of an author can affect his development of the power concept. Thus, in the Community Power debate, one of the major differences between the two sides was the ideological 'gap' between those holding the 'pluralist' view and those with an 'elitist' notion of power. In the same way, Lukes has argued that the differences between the one, two and three dimensional theories can partly be explained by reference to what he terms their moral and political positions. Thus he identifies three main moral and political positions; the liberal, the reformist and the radical and suggests that these are related to the one, two and three dimensional views of power respectively. Finally in the case of the industrial relations literature we can demonstrate that the unitary, pluralist and radical ideologies all hold differing notions of power.

If it is to be argued that existing theories of power are tied to epistemological and ideological positions, then perhaps some framework for portraying, depicting and subsequently analysing such positions is required at this stage. Such a framework would serve two distinct purposes. Firstly, it would demonstrate conclusively the link between theoretical model and epistemological and ideological position and secondly, it would perhaps identify new avenues which might be fruitful to the development of an alternative model of power.

3.1 The philosophical arena

The work of Burrell and Morgan (1979) provides a useful framework for the analysis and 'mapping' of epistemological and ideological positions and this framework will be utilised in this section.

They argue that "all theories of organisation are based upon a philosophy of science and a theory of society". (1979: 1). All such theories therefore adopt, explicitly or implicitly, certain assumptions about both the nature of social science and the nature of society. So far in this thesis the term epistemology has been used to refer to the 'philosophy of knowledge' or the 'nature of social science'. In other words, 'epistemology' has been used as a generic term to refer to the first of Burrell and Morgan's set of assumptions. However Burrell and Morgan go further than this and identify four different sets of assumptions concerning social science. These are assumptions about ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology. The extreme positions on this set of assumptions are then used to delineate two distinct approaches to social science, the subjectivist and the objectivist. These approaches and their assumptions are illustrated in Figure 3.1. We can now examine and explain each of these opposing sets of assumptions before turning our attention to the assumptions which concern the nature of society.

Firstly we have the assumptions concerning ontology or the theory of existence. On the one hand we have Nominalism which has been defined as "the denial of real existence to abstract entities or universals". (Dictionary of Modern Thought 1977: 428). It involves the supposition that the social world merely consists of names, concepts and labels which are used to structure reality. Thus there is no other reality than the language which is used to make sense of the external social world. In opposition to this stands Realism which has been described as "the theory that abstract entities or universals really exist in a world of their own". (Dictionary of Modern Thought 1977: 526). Thus realism presumes that the social world is made up of real tangible

structures which exist as empirical entities independent of our labelling.

3.1 A scheme for analysing assumptions about the nature of social science: The subjective - objective dimension

The Subjectivist approach to social science		The Objectivist approach to social science
NOMINALISM	ONTOLOGY	REALISM
ANTI-POSITIVISM	EPISTEMOLOGY	POSITIVISM
VOLUNTARISM	HUMAN NATURE	DETERMINISM
IDIOGRAPHIC	METHODOLOGY	NOMOTHETIC

Source: Burrell and Morgan (1979: 3)

We can now turn from the ontological to the epistemological debate. Positivism has been described as "the view that all true knowledge is scientific, in the sense of describing the co-existence and succession of observable phenomena". (Dictionary of Modern Thought 1977: 488) and thus is generally applied to stances which are based upon the traditional approach to the natural sciences. One characteristic feature of positivism is the methodology of variable analysis. Walsh (1972) has argued that,

"variable analysis does not necessarily deny the meaningful character of social phenomena but attempts to reduce social life to variables and their relationships. Meaning is treated as an intervening variable. Such variables are structural and organisational categories of social life, identified as realities in terms of objective indices through the use of sociological concepts and models and of which social action is taken to be the product". (1972: 41)

Therefore the meanings of actors are turned into variables which can be identified in terms of objective indices. As I have argued elsewhere,

"Explanation in variable analysis is achieved by attempting to establish causal connections between the specified variables. Therefore statistical correlations are usually sought between variables and those correlated relationships followed up. The correlations are used as a basis for the imputation of causal connections". (Kirkbride 1979: 331-332)

Positivist epistemologies thus seek to explain and predict the events of the social world by searching for regularities and causal relationships between its elements.

The positivist approach has been criticised over recent years from many different quarters. The criticisms have not always been in agreement and have come from different schools of thought. However, it is possible to subsume them under the generic label of the 'anti-positivist' or 'action' approach.

The action approach argues that positivism mistakes the nature of social phenomena in assuming them to be the same as natural phenomena.

What then are the characteristics of natural and social phenomena? It is argued that natural phenomena are intrinsically meaningless. As Schutz points out:

"The facts, data and events with which the natural scientist has to deal are just facts, data and events within his observational field, but this field does not 'mean' anything to the molecules, atoms and electrons therein". (1962: 5)

Because natural phenomena are intrinsically meaningless, scientists are able to gain strong consensual agreement about the character of the world and the rules of procedure necessary to discover it. Thus the natural sciences can be "characterised in terms of the taken-for-granted paradigm shared by their practitioners". (Walsh 1972: 17)

In contradistinction, social phenomena are intrinsically meaningful. Thus to quote Schutz again:

"the social world is not essentially structureless. It has a particular meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, thinking and acting therein". (Schutz 1962: 5-6)

The social world is experienced by its members and they attach meanings to it. Therefore in order to explain the social world access has to be gained to the meanings given to social relations by the actors involved.

Thus the action approach is concerned with understanding action rather than with observing behaviour as specified by positivism. By looking solely at observable behaviour one misses the significance and value that the actors place upon the behaviour. Therefore one loses the significance of that behaviour to both the actor and the recipient.

Thus one should not be merely concerned with behaviour but should attempt to analyse the meaning behind behaviour. Weber has argued that we should be concerned with:

"the interpretation of action in terms of its subjective meaning" (1964: 94).

Action in these terms is therefore all behaviour that has subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual.

How then does action arise? Positivists argue that a given behaviour can be explained by reference to structural factors which are said to call forth the behaviour pattern. However, this type of analysis fails to take account of what Silverman calls: "the internal logic of the situation". (1970: 129)

By this it is meant that an individual's responses are mediated by his assignment of meaning to the structure and to the actions of others. The meanings involved are affected by the "expectation system" of the individual which is a product of present and past experiences. Action is therefore not determined by the structural stimulus but by this system of expectations, values, needs and aspirations.

Where do meanings originate? It may be argued that meanings reside in social institutions and are internalised by individuals through interaction. Silverman argues that "social reality is 'pre-defined' in the very language in which we are socialised". (1970: 131). Language enables the individual to define typical features and actions contained in the social world.

It follows from this that "while society defines man, man in turn defines society". (1970: 126). Thus the social world is constructed and reaffirmed by the inter-action of individuals. The social structure therefore is only "real" in a human sense and exists only as long as human beings recognise it as part of their world. Therefore if society is regarded as having an existence separate from the actions of men, then the concepts of society and social structure have been reified. The acceptance of the thesis that society is socially constructed leads inevitably to the questioning of certain types of explanation. To relate one structural variable to another, may result in a failure to account for the orientations of the individuals involved and the meanings they attach to the concepts in their world. As Silvermann correctly points out:

"It is out of factors like these that action is generated: to pay insufficient attention to them can involve the sociologist in an empty determinism in which things happen and processes occur apparently without the direct intervention of human purposes". (1970: 126)

Society and meanings are not only socially constructed, they are socially changed by the interaction of individuals. The absence of a shared value system means that individuals attach different meanings to interactions. The existence of different meanings in interaction shows the advantages of an action approach over a positivist approach. As a positivist approach is concerned with the viewpoint of the authorities (in their concern with order), then it is unable to see any other points of view. The action approach enables the researcher to concentrate upon the existence of different meaning systems. What is a problem for one individual in an interaction may not be a problem for

another.

Therefore in order to explain social phenomena the researcher must take account of the meanings which those concerned assign to their acts. Thus positivism, which argues that action is determined by external and constraining forces alone, is inadequate as an explanation of social phenomena. Berger (1966) has accused positivism of viewing society as a "prison" or a "puppet theatre". Thus society is seen in the former as an external structure which controls men by social facts. In the latter society is internalised in men by socialisation and they are controlled by their social roles. However, there is an alternative view:

"Society may be seen as populated by living actors and its institutions regarded as dramatic conventions depending on the co-operation of the actors in maintaining a definition of the situation". (1970: 144)

This, then, is the perspective of the anti-positivist or "action" approach.

Turning our attention to the set of assumptions concerning 'human nature' we can identify two extreme positions. The 'determinist' view argues that man is completely determined by the environment in which he is located. At the opposite extreme, in contrast, is the 'voluntarist' view which emphasises the role of free will in decision-making and the autonomous nature of man. The final set of assumptions are concerned with methodology. The idiographic method stresses the study of particular cases and is based upon the idea that the social world can only be understood by gaining close knowledge of the subject under investigation.

Thus the approach emphasises subjective 'accounts' generated by ethnographic methods. In contrast the nomothetic approach is concerned with the search for general laws or theories which will cover whole classes of cases. This search involves the use of standard scientific methods such as tests, experiments, quantitative techniques, surveys and questionnaires which are all designed as research instruments to test hypothesis in line with scientific procedure.

These four sets of assumptions and the contrasting positions taken on each, produce two distinct approaches to social science. The objectivist position characterised by realism, positivism, determinism and the nomotheric methodology is usually referred to as 'sociological positivism'. This stands in opposition to the subjectivist approach which is characterised by nominalism, anti-positivism, voluntarism and the idiographic methodology. This approach to social science is contained in the tradition of 'German Idealism'.

Turning our attention from the nature of social science to the nature of society itself, it may be argued that there are two major sets of assumptions which are contradictory. On the one side are those approaches which focus upon the explanation of stability and social order and on the other hand there are those theories that concentrate upon issues of change and conflict in society. This dichotomy of views has been variously referred to as the 'order-conflict' or the 'consensus - conflict' debate. As we have already seen, it was this split that was at the heart of the 'Community Power Debate'. It was also suggested in Chapter 1 that this was one of the major issues or problems which divided and confused the tradition of power theorising. Burrell and Morgan (1979) have argued that while the 'order - conflict'

dichotomy is still valid, it is in some respects problematic and therefore should be replaced by notions of 'regulation' and 'radical change'. Thus they use the term 'sociology of regulation' to

"refer to the writings of theorists who are primarily concerned to provide explanations of society in terms which emphasise its underlying unity and cohesiveness". (1979: 17)

This is therefore an approach which focuses upon why society is maintained as an entity and does not collapse into disorder. From a distinctly different viewpoint the 'sociology of radical change' is concerned to,

"find explanations for the radical change, deep-seated structural conflict, modes of domination and structural contradiction which its theorists see as characterising modern society". (1979: 17)

The 'objectivist' and 'subjectivist' approaches to social science and the opposing sociologies of 'regulation' and 'radical change' can now be combined to create four distinct paradigms for the analysis of social theory. These paradigms are illustrated in diagrammatic form in Figure 3.2

Figure 3.2 Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory

'The sociology of radical change'

SUBJECTIVE	'RADICAL HUMANIST'	'RADICAL STRUCTURALIST'
	'INTERPRETIVE'	'FUNCTIONALIST'

OBJECTIVE

'The sociology of regulation'

Thus the 'sociology of radical change' is divided into its subjective and objective forms which are 'radical humanism' and 'radical structuralism' respectively. Similarly the 'sociology of regulation' is divided into the 'Interpretive' paradigm (subjective) and the 'Functionalist paradigm (objective). This framework can now be utilised in order to 'map' the positions of the various theories of power that have already been discussed.

3.2 Locating the theories of power

Attempting to locate the work of Weber on the two dimensions of the framework is difficult because his work is confused and at times contradictory. Therefore, as with his concept of power, Weber's work leads to a variety of differing interpretations. On the one hand, as we saw in Chapter 1, Weber can be seen as an 'interpretive sociologist'. As Burrell and Morgan suggest,

> "it is through the work of Weber that the notion of verstehen as method has had the greatest impact on sociological thought, and nowhere is the bridge-building exercise between idealism and positivism more evident. (...) He was dissatisfied with the superficialities which he regarded as characterising positivist explanations of society, and also greatly concerned with the subjective and 'unscientific' nature of idealist thought. His solution to the problem is found in his methodological writings, in which he develops the view that explanations or social affairs must be 'adequate on the level of meaning' and that the essential function of social science is to be 'interpretive', that is, to understand the subjective meaning of social action". (1979: 230)

Thus in relation to the methodological strand of the set of assumptions about social science, Weber occupies an idiographic position.

Yet in respect of the other three strands, it may be argued that Weber adopts not a subjectivist, but instead an objectivist position. He thus tends towards realism, positivism and determinism. On the other major dimension Weber can be seen to be a 'sociologist of regulation' in terms of his concern with social order and rationality. Thus Weber can be located somewhere towards the fringe of the Functionalist paradigm. It is important to note, however, that some theorists have detected another tendency in the work of Weber and have accordingly seen aspects of his work as in the tradition of the 'sociology of radical change'. This school of thought has been called 'radical Weberianism' (Burrell and Morgan 1979). What is important for these theorists, they argue is,

"not that Weber was primarily a sociologist of order and regulation, but that his ambivalent attitude to capitalism, and particularly to the place of bureaucracy within it, left open avenues for exploration which lead to a sociology of radical change". (1979: 332)

These theorists therefore tend to concentrate upon Weber's analysis of Bureaucracy and its uses as a form of domination and upon his concepts of dominancy, authority and power as crucial features of a capitalist society. As only a change on the regulation-radical change axis is proposed these theorists would locate their version of Weber's work in the radical structuralist paradigm.

In the 'Community Power' debate the positions of the protagonists are fairly sharply delineated. On one side stand the 'pluralists' such as Dahl (1957) and on the other one the 'elitists' such as C. Wright Mills (1956) and Hunter (1953). We have already extensively discussed both these opposing theories of power.

The pluralist approach is obviously centrally related to the debate over the nature of society. Whilst it is predominantly concerned with order and regulation, it acknowledges, in a way that unitarism does not, the existence of conflict in social and industrial life. Thus in relation to the framework that we have adopted it occupies a boundary position just within the 'sociology of regulation' but located towards the edge which leads to the 'sociology of radical change'. Although, in itself, pluralism is not concerned with the nature of social science, its purveyors tend to adopt certain positions as regards ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology. These links have been demonstrated both in our discussion of the 'Community Power' debate and pluralism in industrial relations. It is therefore possible to argue that pluralist writers tend to adopt an objectivist approach to social science and that this, together with their partial focus upon regulation, locates them within the 'functionalist' paradigm. On the other side of the debate, the 'elitist' or 'conflict' theorists are obviously located within the 'sociology of radical change'. Again while they do not directly consider the philosophy of social science, an examination of their work would locate most of them within the 'objectivist' mould and thus within the 'radical structuralist' paradigm.

The work of Parsons can be categorised as structural-functionist in orientation and as being located in the wider social systems tradition. Indeed his work can be said to have introduced the concept of systems theory into the literature of social science. His work has been widely criticised (Gouldner 1959, Mills 1970 amongst others) as being conservative, supportive of the status quo and unable to cope with conflict and change and these tendencies are amply illustrated in his treatment

of power.

In the field of exchange theory, the work of Emerson (1962) can be categorised as falling in the 'functionalist' paradigm. In terms of ideology he can be located as a pluralist focusing upon the existence of conflict and the existence of different forms of power. In terms of the philosophy of social science parameter Emerson can be categorised within the 'objectivist' approach to social science because of his ultimate reliance upon behavioural criteria. The exchange theory of Blau (1964) is characterised by Burrell and Morgan as being an example of 'integrative theory'. This refers to the,

"brand of sociological theorising which occupies the middle ground within the functionalist paradigm. In essence, it seeks to integrate various elements of interactionism and social systems theory and, in certain cases, to counter the challenge to the functionalist perspective posed by theories characteristic of the radical structuralist paradigm, particularly those of Marx". (1979: 87)

Because of Blau's emphasis on the role of power and exchange processes in sustaining social life and their integrating role in the explanation of social structure, he can be seen to be moving toward the 'radical change' side of the debate about the nature of society. Therefore he can be located with Emerson in the upper part of the functionalist paradigm.

A theorist who adopts a confusing position on the framework we are utilising is Martin (1977). Early in his book, during his attempted definition of the concept of power, he specifically rejects the organismic systems approach of Parsons, the pluralist view of Dahl and

the Weberian view in favour of the morphogenic or cybernetic system approach first outlined by Buckley (1967). This would place Martin firmly in the Functionalist paradigm, albeit located towards its subjectivist edge. However, later in his book it becomes clear that Martin is using a semi-marxist approach. Indeed in the last chapter he states that,

"The general concepts used in this study are Marxist, involving a dialectic between the forces of production, especially technology, and the relations of production". (1977: 164)

Yet Martin acknowledges that he does not fully adopt a marxist structuralist position. It is difficult to define his actual location but he utilises elements of Marxist humanist, radical Weberianism and pluralism and thus can be seen to be moving from a position just inside the functionalist paradigm towards the radical dimension.

Lukes (1974) has developed a three dimensional view of power which he specifically argues is 'radical' in nature. Thus he can be squarely located within the 'sociology of radical change'. However his position on the other dimension is not quite so clear. In the latter part of his book he appears to criticise the structuralist theories of Althusser and Poulantzas, yet it would perhaps be inappropriate to locate him in the 'radical humanist' paradigm. Thus Lukes appears to occupy a boundary position between the 'subjectivist' and 'objectivist' positions and thus between the 'radical humanist' and 'radical stucturalist' paradigms. The locations of all the above social and political theories of power can be seen in Figure 3.3.

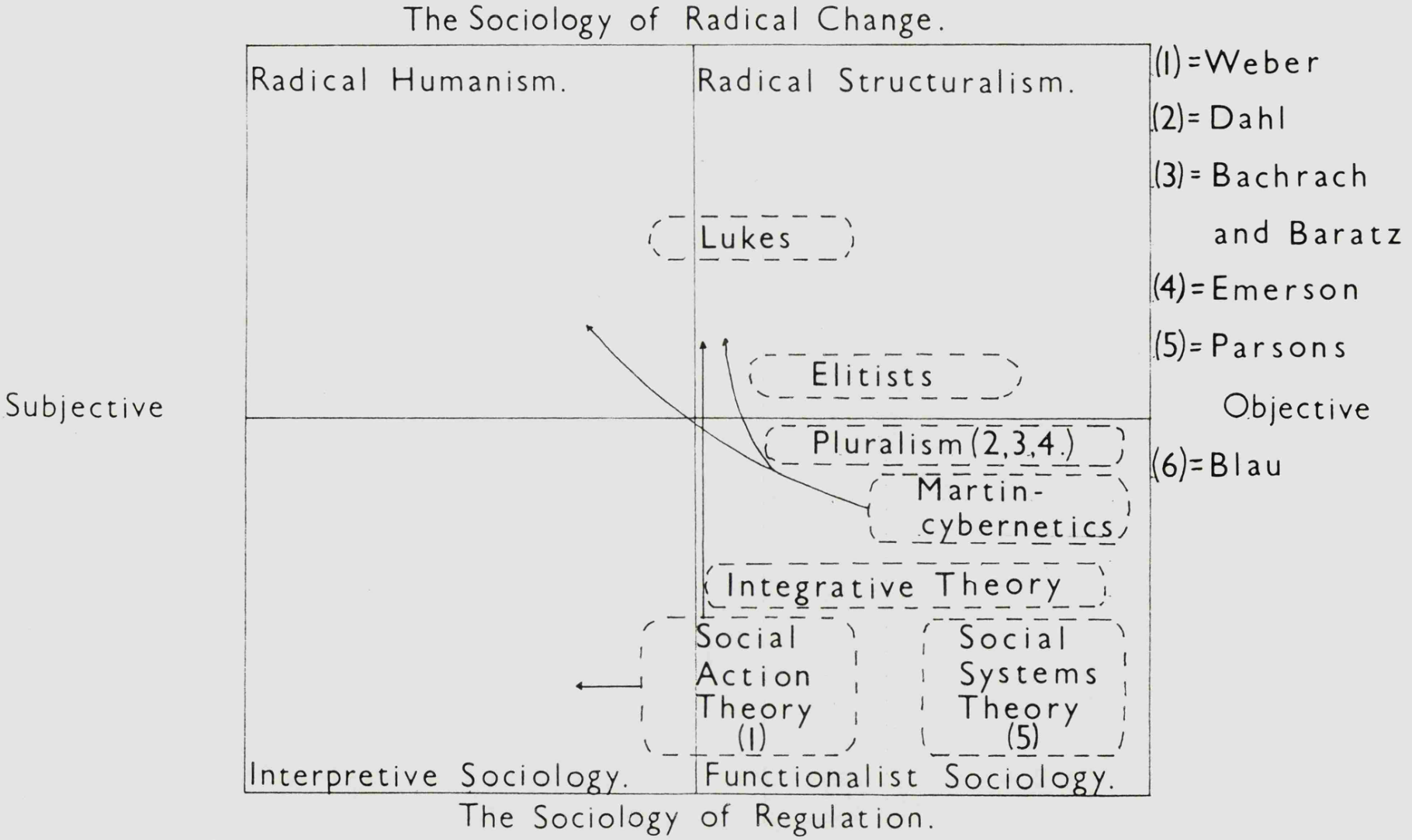


Figure 3·3 The General Theories of Power.

A careful examination and analysis of the organisational theories of power reveals that, despite the large number of authors cited, the literature can be divided into two distinct 'traditions'. The first group consists of those theorists who adopt a pluralist approach to power within organisations and in social theory in general. They accept that there is conflict between various interest groups within organisations and discuss the way in which various factors such as management, sub-units or lower participants attempt to gain or exercise power. Thus Etzioni (1961) identifies the different forms of power that can be exercised by a superior group as well as the different reactions to the exercise of power by lower participants. Mechanic (1962) describes the power bases available to lower participants while French and Raven (1959) discuss the range of power resources available to a variety of actors. Crozier (1964) analyses the conflict of interests and power bargaining processes which characterise group relationships in organisations. Thus he demonstrates how various groups in the organisation attempt to gain control by utilising the sources of power that they possess. As Burrell and Morgan argue,

"In line with other theorists in the pluralist tradition, Crozier sees the power struggle within organisations as being limited by certain stabilising factors, such as the need to maintain minimum standards of efficiency, and other social factors which ensure that the organisation continues as an ongoing concern. In the true tradition of conflict functionalism, therefore, conflict is seen as having its limits". (1979: 211)

The work of Hickson et al (1971), derived as it is from these sources, can also be classified as a 'pluralist' approach.

The second group includes those whose theories of power are located within an open systems tradition of contingency theory. Open systems theory was developed in the late 1950's as an improvement upon the basic structural - functionalist approaches to organisations by researchers at the Tavistock Institute (Trist and Bamforth 1951, Rice 1958, Rice 1963). The organisation is viewed as a living organism which is 'open' to its environment and must maintain itself through the process of exchange with the environment. Although an improvement upon early models, this approach is still unitary in its perspective and is 'locked' within the 'functionalist' paradigm. Contingency theory represents the contemporary synthesis of the structural - functionalist approaches, open systems theory and the various empirical studies of organisational characteristics. Its origins can be traced back to the work of Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) on the operations of organisations in a variety of environmental conditions which suggested that different organisational principles were appropriate in different environmental circumstances and indeed within different parts of the same organisation. One of the earliest examples of the contingency model of organisations can be found in the work of Thompson (1967) who views,

"organisations as open systems, hence indeterminate and faced with uncertainty, but at the same time as subject to criteria of rationality and hence needing determinateness and certainty". (1967:10)

Contingency theorists are concerned to understand the relationships between the organisation and its environment and it is assumed that such relationships can only be explained in terms of the organisations 'need' to survive. Further, in line with the use of an organismic analogy, contingency theorists view the organisation as comprising a

series of interdependent sub-systems, each of which has a function to perform within the context of the organisation as a whole. The work of Hickson et al (1971), Abell (1975) and Pfeffer (1981) can be seen to be centrally related to this perspective. The conceptual location of these theorists is thus within a contingency theory which is objectivist in its approach to social science and concerned with order and stability rather than conflict or change. This location is illustrated in Figure 3.4.

In our discussion of the use of power in the industrial relations sphere we suggested that there were three main theoretical approaches and three related political and ideological viewpoints. The theoretical approaches included the systems approaches, the action approaches and the marxist approaches following the classification used by Schienstock (1981). The early systems theories of industrial relations as exemplifed in the work of Dunlop (1958) can be seen as the simple application of mechanistic and organismic analogies of human conduct to the industrial relations arena. The later, more sophisticated, systems theorists (Craig 1973, Singh 1976) tend to be moving toward more complex factional or catastrophic analogies. However both sets of systems theories in industrial relations can be located within the category of social system theory discussed earlier. As we have seen systems theories focus upon order and stability and are at the 'objectivist' end of the social science continuum The action theory model is more difficult to locate as it is rather un-developed. In intention, it appears to be a move towards the more subjective end of the social science continuum . as it seeks to include action and interaction into the analysis.

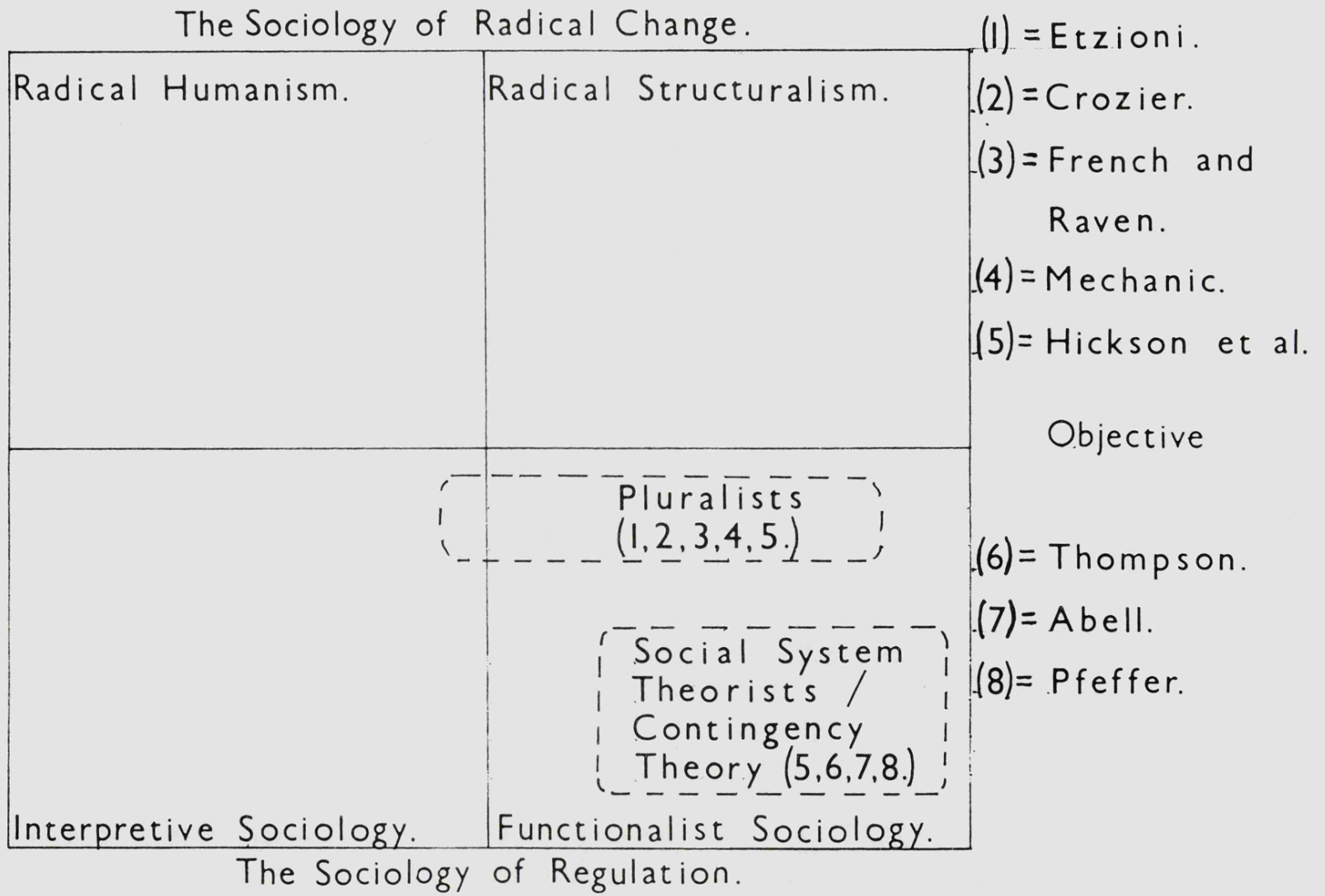


Figure 3:4 Organisational Theories of Power.

However, in the industrial relations literature it seems to be really confined to an analysis of bargaining power viewed in the manner of exchange theory. Thus it can be actually located within the 'functionalist' paradigm and more specifically within the school of integrative theory. The marxist approach is perhaps the easiest of the three to locate in the framework. It is obviously part of the 'sociology of radical change' and to the extent that most marxist theories of industrial relations seem to be predicated upon the work of the 'later' Marx, then they can be squarely placed within the 'radical structuralist' paradigm.

The three political and ideological viewpoints are easy to position on one of the axes of the framework. Thus the unitarist approach can be located in the 'sociology of regulation; the radical approach within the 'sociology of radical change'; while the pluralist approach holds the middle ground but lies just within the regulation 'camp'. In terms of approach to the philosophy of social science they become less clear. We have, however, already argued that the radical and pluralist approaches are generally associated with views towards the 'objectivist' end of the spectrum. The unitarist approach does not appear to address the epistemological, ontological and methodological issues. It is also possible to fix the positions of the few industrial relations writers who have discussed power directly. Thus Marchington can be seen as applying the open systems and contingency theory of organisational power developed by Hickson et al (1971). Poole appears, in terms of his choice of indicators of power, to adopt a pluralist position. Finally Edwards, whose work involves organisations as bargaining and influence systems can be located in the same place as Abell.

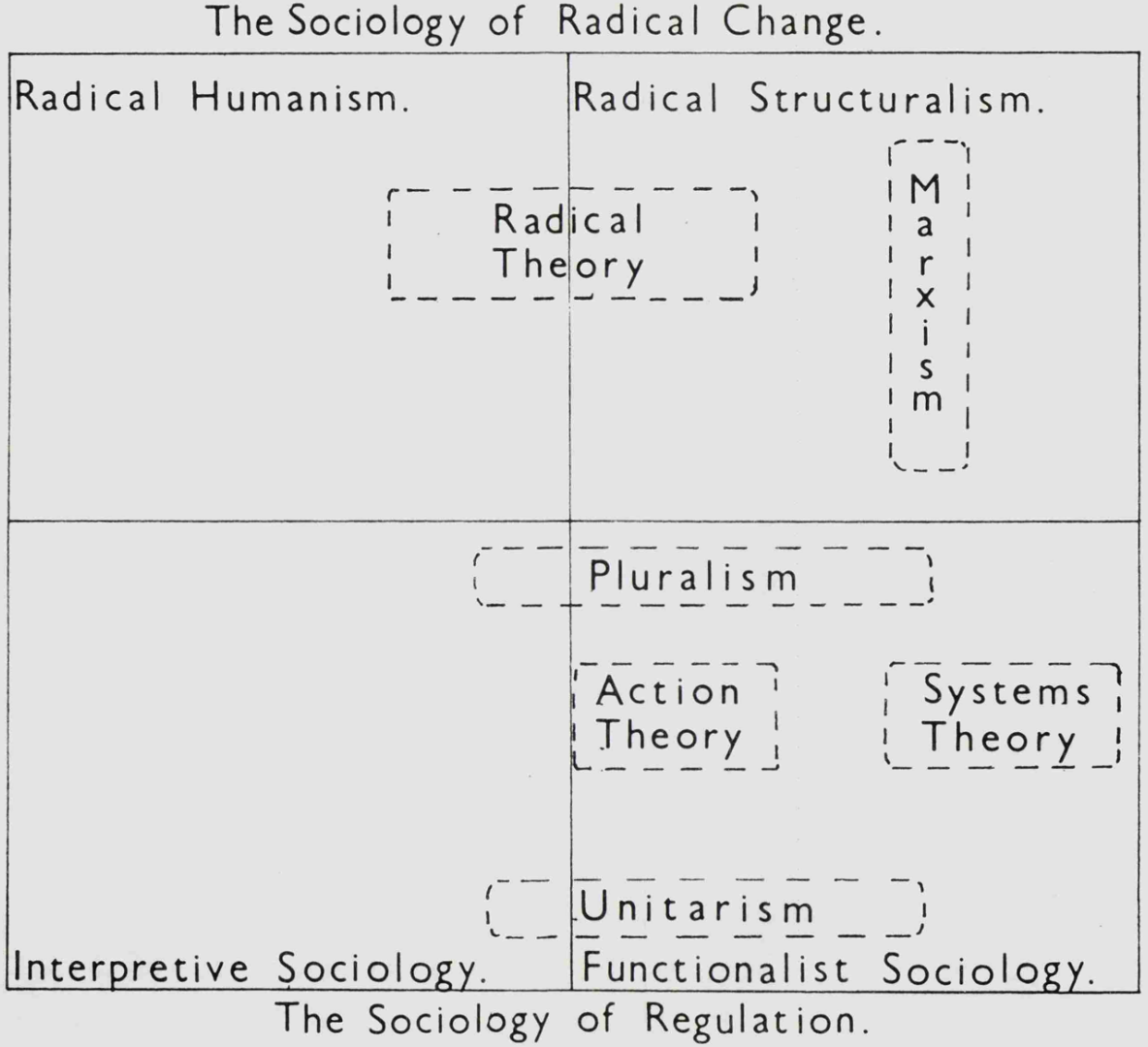


Figure 3·5 Industrial Relations Theories of Power.

The positions of all the industrial relations theories are illustrated in Figure 3.5.

3.3 Where do we go from here?

What has emerged from our attempt to locate or 'map' the theoretical and ideological positions of the views of power that we have examined? The first point is that most of the theories of power can, despite all other differences, be said to share certain common assumptions regarding ontology, epistemology, human nature, methodology and ideology. In short most of the theories of power are located within the broad scope of the functionalist paradigm. This fact has certain important implications. Thus most theories of power tend to focus upon supposedly 'real' structures and events. They tend to propose that power only exists if it can be observed and if objective indices can be used to represent it. Most theories of power also seem to be 'determinist' in that power is related to resources or power bases. The roles played by individuals in producing or reproducing these structures and in shaping the process of power tend to be neglected. Finally, most of the theories utilise the nomothetic approach to methodology in line with their positivist view of epistemology. Thus many theories insist that power must be susceptible to empirical measurement if the concept is to be regarded as valid.

However, it is important to realise that these assumptions do not have to be accepted and, indeed, since they are so important, must be closely examined and questioned. Perhaps the concept of power would be better understood if some of these assumptions were challenged and new ones, initiated by the alternative approaches, were adopted. Perhaps power consists not simply of 'real' structures and events but also can be seen as a process whereby reality is structured through the use of language. It is possible that power can exist even though it cannot directly be observed as is envisaged

in the three dimensional view of Lukes. The concept of power might be enriched if the role of individuals, as active subjects in the processes of power, were considered. Finally perhaps the use of the idiographic methodology would reveal new and subtle facets of the notion of power. Thus, in terms of the framework, there exist three other paradigms which could be explored and which may offer useful insights into power. As Burrell and Morgan have argued in respect of organisational theory;

"One of the major conclusions prompted by our journey through the realms of social theory, therefore, is that organisational theorists face a wide range of choices with regard to the nature of the assumptions which underwrite their point of view. For those who wish to leave the functionalist orthodoxy behind, many avenues offer themselves for exploration". (1979: 398)

Thus the radical humanist, radical structuralist and interpretive paradigms offer themselves as relatively unexplored territory as far as the concept of power in industrial relations is concerned.

The second point to emerge from this 'mapping' process is that the few excursions that have been made outside the functionalist orthodoxy have been marxist or radical approaches (generally located within the 'radical structuralist' paradigm). It may be argued that these theories from both the general social and political and industrial relations literature have offered new and novel insights into power theorising.

What position will be taken during the remainder of this thesis regarding the epistemology and ideology of power? It will be argued firstly that a clearer understanding of power would emerge if more

attention were to be paid to the 'subjective' view of social science. Indeed it has already been proposed that the nominalist, anti-positivist, voluntarist and idiographic positions could illuminate the study of power. However, the objectivist position should not be ignored as it has generated some illuminating insights into certain facets of the operation of power. Secondly it will be argued that greater, attention needs to be paid to the 'sociology of radical change'. Theories in this category have already produced novel views of the processes of power.

Thus what is being proposed at this point can best be understood as a synthesis of the 'radical structuralist' and 'interpretive' paradigms together with the existing knowledge about power derived from the 'functionalist' paradigm. The 'radical structuralist' paradigm is necessary because of its focus upon structures of domination and power conceived in a structural manner. The 'interpretive' paradigm is useful because of the need to incorporate 'action' elements into a model of power. The results of this synthesis of action and structural elements can be seen in the following chapter. It should be noted that this is not a plea for a 'neutral' emasculated social theory but instead is a plea which recognises the fact that power operates on many levels and possesses many facets and thus cannot be truly represented by one paradigm.

Chapter 4

An alternative view of power

4.1 Action and structure in social theory

If we are to explain an alternative perspective of power we have to step back from the concept itself and instead consider the essentials of social theory. Indeed some of the theories of power already discussed may be criticised precisely because of their uncritical 'common-sense' or 'taken-for-granted' definitions and understanding of power. It will be suggested in this work that power is not simply 'another' concept or variable to be isolated, defined and measured, but is inherently entwined in the very fabric of social life and its processes. Thus in order to understand power we need to move back from the level of appearances to deeper levels of social understanding. This brings us back to the dichotomy of 'objective' and 'subjective' approaches to social science. We have already seen that nearly all the theories of power can be located toward the 'objective' end of that continuum. However in recent years there has been an increase in work which focuses upon the 'subjective' or 'action' end. Unfortunately, such work has generally ignored the topic of power. It will be argued here that any new model of power will have to reconcile and synthesise the 'structural' and 'action' approaches. Only from such a synthesis will a deeper understanding emerge.

Several authors have drawn attention to the differences between theories of action and theories of structure and have suggested methods of synthesis. Giddens (1976, 1977, 1979) has written at length and in great detail about both theories of action and structure. He suggests that,

"'Action' and 'structure' normally appear in both the sociological and philosophical literature as antinomies. Broadly speaking, it would be true to say that those schools of thought which have been pre-

occupied with action have paid little attention to, or have found no way of coping with, conceptions of structural explanation or social causation; they have also failed to relate action theory to problems of institutional transformation ..... Functionalism and structuralism are alike in according a priority to the object over the subject or, in some sense, to structure over action". (1979: 50-51)

Clegg (1975) in his analysis of power in sociological theory and organisational life also identifies the two approaches, albeit in a more concrete form. Thus he discusses the, "structural concept of 'domination' and the action concept of 'power'". (1975: 67). Interestingly, both Giddens and Clegg proceed to their resolution of the theoretical dichotomy by use of similar linguistic analogies. Giddens develops his theory of 'structuration' by arguing that,

"Sociology is not concerned with a pre-given universe of objects, but with one which is constituted or produced by the active doing of subjects .... The production and reproduction of society thus has to be treated as a skilled performance on the part of its members". (1975: 160)

Giddens then uses a comparison with language to demonstrate this process of production and reproduction. Language is used not because social life 'is' a language but because language exemplifies some, and only some, aspects of social life. Language, as with social life, is produced and reproduced. Language, suggests Giddens, has three important facets. It is 'mastered' as an act; it is used as a medium of communication between members of a community; and it forms a 'structure' of rules which are creatively employed by the community of speakers. Applying these points to social life, Giddens argues that,

"Social life .... may be treated as a set of reproduced practices. Following the threefold approach distinguished above, social practices may be studied, first, from the point of view of their constitution as a series of acts, 'brought off' by actors; second, as constituting forms of interaction, involving the communication of meaning; and third, as constituting structures which pertain to 'collectivities' or 'social communities'". (1976: 104)

The implications of this analysis will be considered shortly. Clegg, on the other hand, uses the notion of deep and surface rules derived initially from structural linguistics and the work of Chomsky (1968) into transformational grammar. He then considers the ethnomethodological use of this concept by Cicourel (1973). Cicourel adopts the deep/surface model referring to deep structure as interpretive procedures. Thus Cicourel argues that,

"'Interpretive procedures' as opposed to 'surface rules' (norms) are similar to, but in many ways different from, Chomsky's distinction between 'deep structure' (for rendering a semantic interpretation to sentences) and 'surface structure' (for designating phonetic interpretations to sentences), for interpretive procedures are constitutive of the members sense of social structure or organisation. The acquisition of interpretive procedures provides the actor with a basis for assigning meaning to his environment or a sense of social structure, thus orienting him to the relevance of 'surface rules' or 'norms'". (1973: 44-45)

Clegg adopts the view of deep/surface structures from both Chomsky and Cicourel and uses them, as we shall see later, to construct a model of power in organisations. Indeed Clegg views the idea of 'rule' as the crucial link between theories of action and theories of structure.

Giddens and Clegg are not the only writers to have addressed the problems caused by the conflicting theories of action and structure. In recent years there has developed a very small corpus of research in the United States which deals with this problem. This appears largely to have arisen in the field of organisation analysis and studies. Thus Benson (1977a), in an introductory article to a journal issue dealing with organisational theory, suggests that the study of complex organisations is in a period of crisis and that this crisis manifests itself in the theoretical, epistemological, methodological and practical aspects of the field. Benson argues that the orthodoxy of organisational theory (which he criticises in similar ways to those advanced in this work) has been increasingly challenged in recent years by work which threatens the established functionalist paradigm. One major contribution to the crisis is the increased focus upon action as opposed to structure. Thus Benson sees much of the newer research as focusing,

> "attention upon the production and reproduction of organisational reality in the ongoing interactions of people . (.....). Recent developments have thrust the action issue to center stage. It can no longer be shunted aside as a peripheral matter or the domain of some other discipline. The established approaches have been undermined by critiques in which the grounding and production of organisational realities are central". (1977a: 6)

Benson cites critiques from ethnomethodology, phenomenology and marxism including Bittner (1965), Silverman (1971), Jehenson (1973) and Giddens (1976). Benson himself, in another paper (1977b), has added to the crisis by proposing a dialetical theory of organisations which, drawing upon a general marxist and radical perspective on social

life, challenges the theoretical and epistemological orthodoxies current in the field. Benson states the case for his dialectical theory as follows;

"Dialectical theory, because it is essentially a processual perspective, focuses on the dimension currently missing in much organisational thought. It offers an explanation of the processes involved in the production, the reproduction, and the destruction of particular organisational forms. It opens analysis to the processes through which actors come out and stabilize a sphere of rationality and those through which such rationalised spheres dissolve". (1977b:2)

For Benson, dialectical analysis is guided by four principles. These are social construction/production, totality, contradiction and praxis. These principles will be discussed later in this chapter. However, if we focus attention upon the first principle we can clearly see parallels between the work of Benson and that of Giddens. By social construction/production Benson refers to the fact that the social world is not given as an objective fact but is instead constantly constructed and produced by human activity. This clearly corresponds to the views of Giddens (1976: 160). Benson also argues that this process of production is constrained by the existing social structure. Thus he states that,

"People produce a social world which stands over them, constraining their actions. The production of social structure, then, occurs within a social structure". (1977b: 3)

In a similar manner Giddens has argued that,

"The realm of human agency is bounded. Men produce society, but they do so as historically located actors, and not under conditions of

their own choosing". (1976: 160)

The two authors differ in so far as Benson proceeds from this analysis into an explicitly marxist analysis of the way in which structures are changed by the process of 'the negation of the negation'.

Another American organisational theorist concerned with the differences and conflicts between the action and structural approaches is Brown (1978). He identifies the domains of 'social structures' and 'structures of consciousness', which refer to the Marxian approaches to macro societal issues and the neo-Durkheimian phenomenological and ethnomethodological sociologies of consciousness in micro settings, respectively. Brown suggests that these separate domains could be linked by the use of appropriate strategies and sees the field of organisational theory as providing the correct level and location for such a union. The strategies would thus be scaling the marxist theories down to the organisational level and the scaling up of the micro sociologies to the level of organisational structure. The implications of Brown's analysis will be considered later in this chapter.

4.2 Levels in social analysis

Despite the differences in their analyses, Giddens, Clegg, Brown and Benson all attempt to reconcile the seemingly contradictory theories of action and structure by reference, either expressly or implicitly, to the notion of different 'levels' in social life.

The concept of levels derived by Giddens refers back to his discussion of language and some of its similarities to social life. It may be recalled that Giddens identified the notions of social reproduction as

an act, an interaction and as a structure. He then proceeds to examine in more detail the notion of structure as used in structuralism and functionalism which he finds to be deficient. However, the concept of structure can be saved from the failings of its usage in both these theories. This is done via his theory of structuration. Giddens argues that to,

"study structuration is to attempt to determine the conditions which govern the community and dissolution of structures or types of structure. Put it another way: to enquire into the process of reproduction is to specify the connections between 'structuration and 'structure'. The characteristic error of the philosophy of action is to treat the problem of 'production' only', thus not developing any concept of structural analysis at all; the limitation of both structuralism and functionalism, on the other hand, is to regard 'reproduction' as a mechanical outcome, rather than as an active constituting process, accomplished by, and consisting in the doings of active subjects". (1976: 120-121)

This notion of structuration is then enshrined in one of the new rules of the sociological method where Giddens refers to the 'duality of structure'. By this he means that structures have both constraining and enabling features. Or to put it another way, social structures are constituted by action, whilst at the same time action is constituted structurally. This is a difficult yet important notion. Giddens representation of this 'duality' of structure is contained in Figure 4.1 below.

INTERACTION	Communication	Power	Sanction
(MODALITY)	Interpretive scheme	Facility	Norm
STRUCTURE	Signification	Domination	Legitimation

Figure 4.1 Giddens model of the 'duality of structure' (Giddens 1979:82)

This diagram reflects the 'duality of structure' because the first line refers to properties of action and interaction while the third line refers to properties of structures. By 'modalities' Giddens means the 'mediation of interaction and structure in the processes of social reproduction'. (1976: 122). Returning to the original premise that social life can be viewed as a process of reproduction or a set of reproduced practices, we can then proceed to explain the rest of the diagram. Giddens has suggested that,

"The production of interaction has three fundamental elements: its constitution as 'meaningful'; its constitution as a moral order; and its constitution as the operation of relations of power". (1976: 104)

The reader will see that these elements are reproduced (in a different order) in the last three columns of the diagram. These are all important and deserve explanation although detailed investigation of the constitution of interaction as the operation of relations of power will be reserved for later.

The second column draws upon ideas and concepts developed from the previous discussion of the properties of language and the similarities to social life. Thus the communication of meaning in the process of interaction is achieved by use of interpretative schemes by which members make sense of what each says and does. Such interpretative schemes are drawn from a common cognitive order whilst at the same time reconstituting that same order. As Giddens explains,

"The communication of meaning in interaction involves the use of interpretative schemes by means of which sense is made by participants of what each says and does. The application of such cognitive

schemes, within a framework of mutual knowledge, depends upon and draws from a 'cognitive order' which is shared by a community; but while drawing upon such a cognitive order the application of interpretative schemes at the same time reconstitutes that order". (1976: 122)

In a similar manner power in interaction is created by the use of facilities which enable participants to gain outcomes favourable to them by affecting the conduct of others. These facilities are derived from the structure of dominancy. This is dealt with in the third column. The final column deals with the constitution of interaction as a moral order. As Giddens argued,

"the moral constitution of interaction involves the application of norms which draw from a legitimate order, and yet by that very application reconstitute it". (1976: 122-123)

Thus in a similar manner to properties of interaction, we can now suggest that signification, domination and legitimation are integral properties or characteristics of structures.

Giddens illustrates this theory of the 'duality of structure' by reference to class in capitalist society. Thus the 'legitimacy' of the class structure is seen as being connected with private property and a set of rights defined in general by the state. These rights also form the basis for the system of class 'domination', and the 'signification' of the class structure is provided by the 'class consciousness' or 'class awareness'. Therefore,

"Each of these features of class structure is routinely drawn upon by actors in the course of constituting class relations as inter-

actions; in drawing on them as modalities of interaction; they also reproduce them as that structure. Class structure is both the medium and the outcome of social reproduction". (Giddens 1976: 123)

Giddens is not the only theorist to have addressed the issues of the 'duality of structure' and the existence of different 'levels' in social life. Similar themes have been discussed by Stewart Clegg (1975, 1979). We have already seen that Clegg starts from a discussion of deep and surface rules developed from structural linguistics and ethnomethodology. To this he adds the concept of 'form of life' derived from the philosophical work of Wittgenstein (1968). It is unclear as to exactly what either Wittgenstein or Clegg mean by this phrase. The original reference in Wittgenstein reads as follows,

"It is what human beings say that is true and false; and they agree in the language they use. This is not agreement in opinions but in forms of life ..... What has to be accepted, the given is-so one could say 'forms of life'". (1968: 226)

Clegg appears to view the 'form of life' as a 'standard'. Thus the,

"behaviour glossed over by the phrase 'form of life' indicates that it is behaviour which may be seen as the embodiment of actions oriented towards a standard or measure of activity". (1975: 35)

He also suggests that the 'form of life' can be seen as both a 'bedrock' for social investigation and as iconic by which he means "a material thing whose being is inexplicable apart from the idea(l) projected on to it". (1975: 35). Clegg uses the notion of a 'form of life' to show that this is not just another of 'n' levels of analysis, but is in fact the 'deepest' level. Finally if we return to our discussion

of Weber in Chapter 1 it will be remembered that Clegg, by a re-definition and re-translation of Weber's original German concepts, produced a trilogy of power, rule and domination. These elements together with the notion of 'rules' and 'form of life' form the basis of his model of the 'duality of structure' and the 'levels' of social life.

Clegg's argument can be summarised by the following quotation and diagrammatical representation.

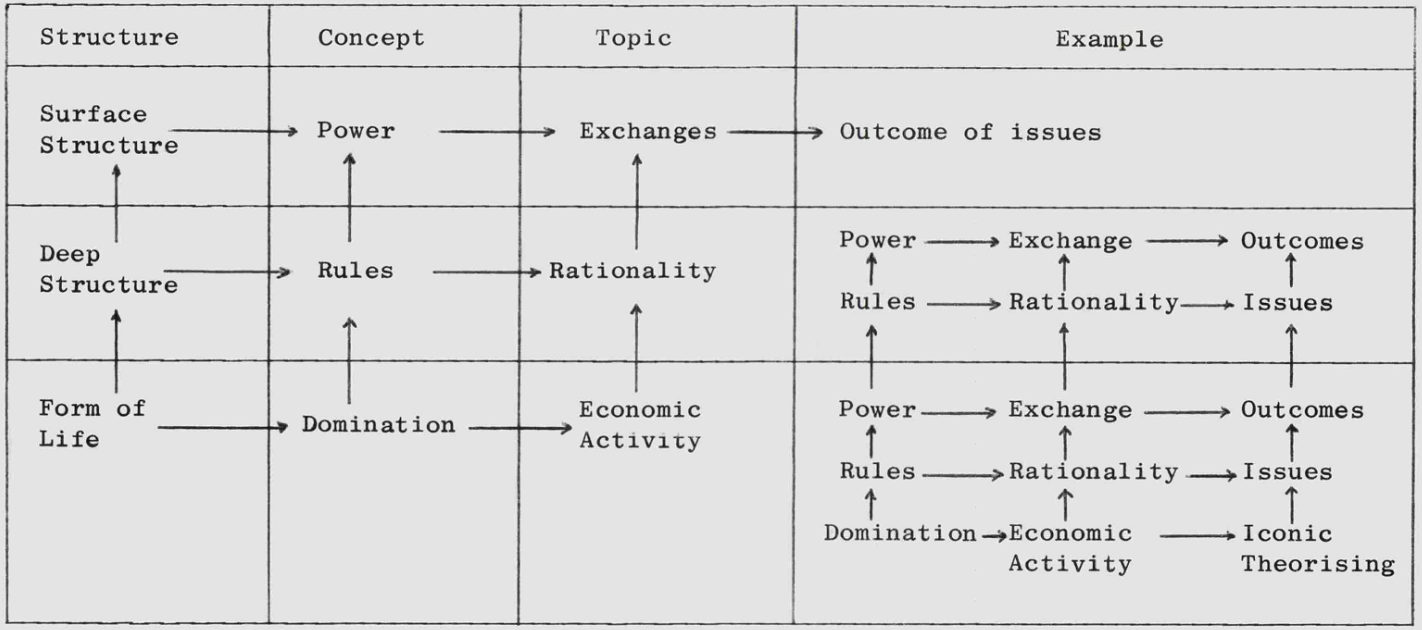
"Domination in everyday organisational life is effected through both 'an objective principle' and a 'concrete object'. Theorising under the icon of this provides a substantive rationality, having point, purpose and regularity, exhibited in the deep structure of rules which enable the surface display of exchanges". (1975: 77)

The first column of the diagram represents the three different levels of social life. The level of surface action and appearances, the level of deep structure and interpretative schemes and, finally, the level of ultimate structure or the form of life. Clegg then relates these levels to the concept of power. Thus he argues that,

"Power is about the outcomes of issues enabled by the rule of a substantive rationality which is temporarily and institutionally located. Underlying this rule is a specific form of domination". (1975: 77-78)

The diagram can be viewed both vertically in terms of the identification of a series of levels and horizontally in terms of the relationships between concepts, topics and examples at each level.

Figure 4.2 The structure of power in organisations



(Clegg 1975: 78)

The similarities between the analyses of Giddens and Clegg in respect of the 'duality of structure' and 'levels' in social life are clear to see. Indeed in a later work Clegg (1979) appears to alter his description of the levels of social life and adopts the terms; 'action, mediation and structure'; which more closely resemble those of Giddens. However, there are important differences between the two authors which we need to be aware of. Clegg, as his diagrammatic representation suggests by its use of arrows, seeks to argue that the structural concept of domination is the 'key' concept in understanding both power and social life. Thus Clegg proceeds to adopt a version of marxist structuralist theory in order to develop his ideas. Giddens is criticised by Clegg because he appears to argue that social structure is dependent upon social action to a certain extent. Thus Clegg suggests (surely incorrectly) that despite his protestations Giddens is in fact adopting a 'quasi' individualist and voluntarist position.

If we return to the work of Benson (1977a, 1977b) we can see that he identifies the problem of 'levels' as one of his four problems leading to a crisis in organisational analysis. Benson points to the challenges to the orthodox assumption that the organisation is a distinct entity and level for study. These challenges come from below, in the form of work into micro-processes (Silverman 1971) and organisational reification and from above in the form of work which focuses upon inter-organisational relations and ultimately the world economy. In this Benson adopts a similar perspective and understanding to Brown (1978). He develops his notion of levels in his discussion of the second principle of a dialectical organisational analysis; namely, totality.

Benson argues that the organisation needs to be studied much more widely and yet at the same time more narrowly. As he suggests,

"Organisational phenomena must be understood as wholes in all of their interpenetrating complexity ..... The conventional separation between organisation and environment must be critically examined. The essential continuity, the relational character of social life must be analysed and not overlooked in a search for analytical boundaries and units of analysis. The processes through which such conventional boundaries are produced and sustained must be pursued. The interests and power relations on which the conventional boundaries rest must be examined". (1977b: 9)

Another theorist who has hinted at the existence of a series of power 'levels' is Lukes (1974). His three dimensions of power can be read as a series of levels upon which power can be said to operate. In so far as the one dimensional approach to power is behaviourally based, one could suggest that this was a surface manifestation of power on the level of 'action'. The two and three dimensional approaches, successively attempt to probe deeper into 'structural' forms of power.

4.3 Reconceptualising power

So far in this Chapter we have seen how the notion of a series of levels in social life has developed from the analysis of the duality of action and structure. We can now attempt to demonstrate the applicability of this analysis to the concept of power.

As with social theory in general, the voluminous power literature exhibits a dualism between action and structure.

Thus one group of theories treats "power as a phenomenon of willed or intended action". (Giddens 1979: 88), while another suggests that power is the property of institutions, communities or structures. Thus there,

"are effectively two versions of how power structures are constituted, and two versions of 'domination' (.....). The first tends to treat domination as a network of decision-making, operating against an unexamined institutional backdrop; the second regards domination as itself an institutional phenomenon, either disregarding power as relating to the active accomplishments of actors, or treating it as in some way determined by institutions ". (Giddens 1979: 89)

How, then, are we to escape from this dilemma and transcend this dualism? The answer lies in returning to the basics of social theory. Giddens has argued that the production of interaction has, as one of its fundamental elements its constitution as the operation of the relations of power. Later he seeks to emphasise that the notion of action and interaction is "logically tied to that of power" (Giddens 1976: 110). At the same time he seems to imply that domination is a fundamental aspect of structure. However, rather than simply asserting that one or the other is 'really' power, he attempts to relate the two and view them both together as representing 'power' in use. In order to facilitate this we need a clearer understanding of 'power' and 'domination' and a linking device.

When considering the action level, Giddens seeks to replace the term 'power' by referring to the 'transformational capacity' of human action. This is defined as the,

"capability of the actor to intervene in a series of events so as to alter their course; as such it is the 'can' which mediates between intentions or wants and the actual realisation of the outcomes sought after". (1976: 111)

As such, transformational capacity is implicit in the very notion of action. 'Transformational power' then becomes a sub-set of capacity. Thus in this sense 'power' refers to,

"interactions where transformative capacity is harnessed to actor's attempts to get others to comply with their wants. Power, in this relational sense, concerns the capability of actors to secure outcomes where the realisation of these outcomes depends upon the agency of others". (1979: 93)

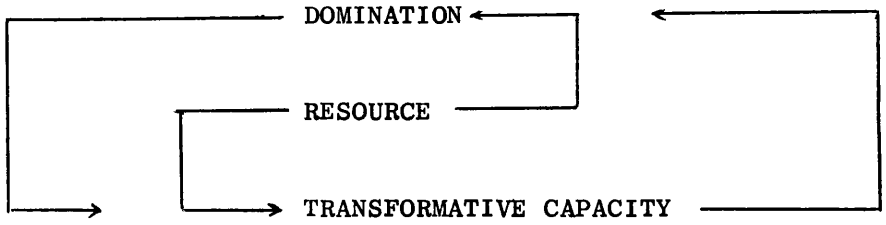
The concept that links together the notion of power as transformational capacity and the notion of power as domination is that of resources. As Giddens argues (and it is worth quoting at length),

"Resources are the media whereby transformative capacity is employed as power in the routine course of social interaction; but they are at the same time structural elements of social systems as systems, reconstituted through their utilisation in social interaction. This is therefore the correlate, in respect of power, of the duality of structure in respect of the communication of meaning and of normative sanctions: resources are not just additional elements to these, but include the means whereby the meaningful and normative content of interaction is actualised. 'Power' intervenes conceptually between the broader notions of transformative capacity on the one side, and of domination on the other: power is a relational concept, but only operates as such through the utilisation of transformative capacity

as generated by structure of domination". (1979:92)

Giddens' understanding of power is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Giddens' view of power



(Giddens 1979: 92)

Power is thus seen as existing on a series of levels in a number of different forms. Power is both an 'action' concept in the form of transformational capacity and a 'structural' concept in the form of domination. The structure of domination obviously places limits upon the transformational 'acts' that can occur, whilst at the same time such 'acts' reinforce and reproduce that structure. The medium by which these processes are achieved is the use of resources. Power is thus not 'a' resource but instead resources are the means through which power is exercised and by which structures of domination are reproduced.

Taking this view it is possible to make some further points concerning power which relate back to issues raised earlier. Firstly, power is a capacity to act which depends upon resources. Thus power can be 'stored-up' for future use and is therefore 'latent'. Secondly this theory of power does not necessarily imply the existence of conflict. This accords with the original view of Weber who argued that power was,

"the chance of a man or of a number of men to realise their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others ...". (1948:)

Finally this view of power seems to suggest that there is no necessary connection between 'intention' or 'will' and power in the manner specified by Weber. Therefore it is possible for power to be exercised without its being intended.

Despite some basic similarities, Giddens takes issue with Lukes' (1974) notion of three-dimensions of power, arguing that, instead of adding in a political element through the notion of interests, Lukes would have done better to address the problem of how to incorporate 'structure' into the treatment of power.

"Rather than adding on another 'dimension' to the decision-making and non-decision making approaches, we need to do what Lukes advocates, but does not in fact accomplish: this implies attempting to overcome the traditional division between 'voluntaristic' and 'structural' notions of power". (Giddens 1979: 91)

Therefore it is argued by Giddens that, despite further efforts in a later paper (Lukes 1977), Lukes is unable to transcend the dualism of action and structure. Thus he

"is unable satisfactorily to deal with structure as implicated in power relations and power relations as implicated in structure". (Giddens 1974: 91)

The irony is that this is the very charge levelled at both Lukes and Giddens by Clegg (1979) when he points out that each,

"wants to talk about power and structure, but ends up talking mainly about power; each subsumes structure to power". (1979: 74)

Giddens, of course, feels that he is relating power to structure as he recognises that

"power must be treated in the context of the duality of structure: if the resources which the existence of domination implies and the exercise of power draws upon, are seen to be at the same time structural components of social systems". (1979: 91)

However it does seem correct to point out that despite his clear analysis of power, Giddens does appear to neglect the concept of domination in his earlier work.

In a later work Giddens (1979) develops his notion of domination from his initial discussion of the duality of agency and structure. Firstly he identifies four major elements of social life. These are shown in diagrammatic form in Figure 4.4

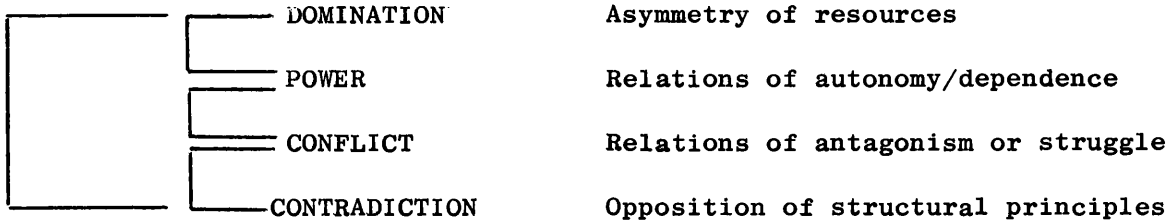


Figure 4.4 The four elements of social life

Domination is seen as involving "asymmetries of resources employed in the restraining of power relations in and between systems of interaction" (1979: 93) while power can be seen as "involving reproduced relations of autonomy and dependence in social interaction". (1979: 93)

Finally, Contradition is defined as "an opposition or disjunction of structural principles of social systems, where those principles operate in terms of each other but at the same time contravene on another". (1979: 141). The relationships between these concepts are clearly shown in the diagram. Thus both domination and contradiction are structural concepts and domination is produced in and through contradiction. Power is related to domination but is only linked to contradiction via domination. Similarly, conflict is directly related to contradiction but only indirectly to domination via power.

Giddens then attempts to introduce the concept of ideology and to show how this is related to domination. Returning to his original model of the duality of agency and structure he argues that,

"To analyse the ideological aspects of symbolic orders .... is to examine how structures of signification are mobilised to legitimate the sectional interests of hegemonic groups". (1979: 188)

Thus ideology relates to all three characteristics of structures: signification, domination and legitimation. However it is possible, as with power, to recognise two distinct forms of ideology. The first is a view of ideology as an action concept, where it involves the direct manipulation of communication by those in the dominant class or elite in order to pursue their own sectional interests. The second method involves examining ideology.

"institutionally (.....) to show how symbolic orders sustain forms of domination in the everyday context of 'lived' experience ..... To study ideology from this aspect is to seek to identify the most basic structural elements which connect signification and legitimation in such a way as to favour dominant interests". (1979:191-192).

Having satisfactorily delineated these forms of ideology we can return from that level of abstraction to examine some of the ways in which ideology is actually used in society. We will see ideology being used in two ways. Firstly on the structural level we will see it used to conceal domination as domination. Thus ideology is a structural factor and forms part of the system of domination, existing in order to conceal itself and that very structure of dominancy. Secondly on the action level it will be used in conjunction with power to conceal sectional interests. One common usage is the representation of sectional interests as universal ones. This, of course, links to the use of 'national interest' arguments as well as to Marx's famous theorum that 'the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas'. A second usage involves denying the existence of contradictions or obscuring their true nature so that ordinary actors can achieve little penetration into the structural conditions of their existence. A good example of this would be the insistence by the Government that 'political' and 'economic' issues be kept separate in the industrial relations field and the argument that trade unions should confine themselves to 'economic' activities. A final ideological strategy that can be adopted by the dominant elite is concerned with the preservation of the status quo. Thus forms of 'signification' are found which 'legitimise' the structure of 'domination'. Giddens refers to this process as the "naturalisation of the present" or "reification". (1979: 195).

As we have already seen Clegg produced his theoretical framework in the process of a discussion on power in organisational life. He proceeded to identify the related concepts of 'power', 'rule' and 'domination'.

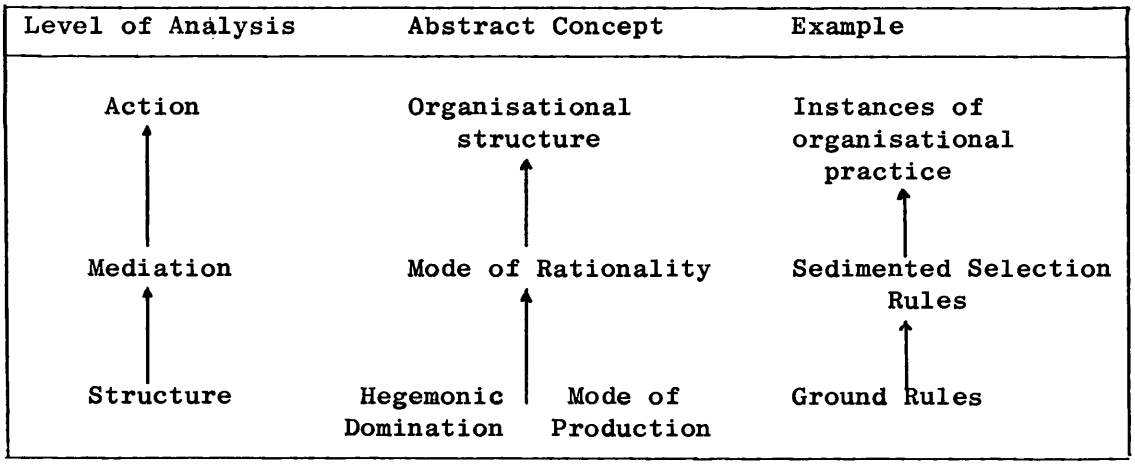
We can now examine these in more detail and compare and contrast them with those of Giddens. Clegg defines his use of power as

"the ability to exercise control over resources which, when subjects engage in practices, produce effects on other subjects". (1979: 95)

Although the formulations are different and the authors, at times, less than specific, it appears that Clegg's notion of power, to a large extent, coincides with that of Giddens. When we examine Clegg's use of the term 'rule' we find that the situation is rather different. Deriving his notion from linguistics, ethnomethodology and philosophy Clegg sees instances of power as displaying, when viewed collectively an "underlying rule" (1979: 96). This rule emphasises the 'sameness' of the activities despite the surface 'difference' in terms of "the underlying mode of rationality of the production of the phenomena of the surface of social life by subjects". (1979: 96). This of course, does not parallel the work of Giddens who uses 'resources' to mediate between power as 'transformational capacity' and power as domination. Yet this confusion can be resolved if one returns to Gidden's original diagrammatical representation of his model. Here he listed the three fundamental elements of interaction and the three main characteristics of structures. It may be argued that in focusing upon 'power' as an action concept and 'domination' as a structural concept Clegg has failed to appreciate the other elements mentioned by Giddens. Thus in discussing the production of interaction Giddens identifies three fundamental elements. These are 'meaning', 'moral order' and power. Clegg merely concentrates upon power. Yet his use of 'rule' mirrors Gidden's's 'interpretive scheme' which is related to 'meaning' (See Figure 4.1). Finally Clegg discusses what he terms 'hegemonic domination' which he sees as inextricably linked in Marxist

structuralist terms to the mode of production. This links easily to Gidden's notions of 'domination' and 'ideology' although these are perhaps a little underdeveloped in Giddens. Clegg summarises his revised argument in terms of a diagram (See Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 Clegg's view of power



(Clegg 1979: 99)

As we can see Clegg delineates the - by now familiar - three levels of social analysis, action, mediation and structure. He then identifies the base of hegemonic domination in the form of the mode of production and demonstrates how this is manifested in a mode of rationality and thus reflected in organisational structure. He also shows how rules exist on this series of levels. Thus instances of organisational practice ('acts' or 'events') reflect selection rules which are in turn determined by the ground rules embedded in the structure of domination.

4.4 Hegemony and ideological domination

From our reconceptualisation of power, through the analysis of the duality of action and structure and through the introduction of levels

in social life, there have emerged several new and related concepts which need to be explored and examined. Thus, attention was directed towards the concepts of hegemony and ideology. We can now consider these in more detail.

The notion of hegemony is related to a wider debate in social theory. This concerns whether coercive or ideational factors provide the central basis of social order. It is possible to identify two fairly clearly defined positions on this debate. Firstly the classical Marxian view which suggests that social order is determined by economic factors. Thus the technological base or substructure of the forces of production determine the form of consciousness. Or, to put it another way the,

"ideological superstructure emerges in response to the existing social structure defined in terms of coercive economic and political social relations". (Sallach 1974: 38)

Marx, had of course, suggested that the ruling elite would perpetrate their ideas as the ruling ideas of the age. However, for him, this process was secondary to the fact of coercive economic domination.

The second view of the debate on ideational or coercive factors can be largely attributed to Gramsci who is responsible for the emergence of the concept of hegemony. Gramsci, the jailed General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, develops the notion of hegemony as the underlying theme of his prison notebooks. While acknowledging the position of Marx, Gramsci was more influenced by ideational factors. As Bates (1975) argues,

"The homo economicus of industrial England, which had captivated Marx

in the British Museum, cast less of a spell in the economically backward land of Saint Francis, Vico and Croce. The tug of this idealist tradition can be seen in Gramsci's estimation of the power, both creative and conservative, of ideas". (1975: 351)

Thus Gramsci appears to argue that the technological base of the forces of production determine what forms of consciousness are possible. In contradistinction to classical Marxism, Gramsci seems to present an 'open' Marxism. This argues that,

"The economic base sets, in a strict manner, the range of possible outcomes but free political and ideological activity is ultimately decisive in determining which alternative prevails". (Femia 1975: 38)

Thus Gramsci argues that social order is, in the last resort, determined by ideational factors within a basic economic coercive framework.

Running parallel to the coercive/ideational debate is another controversy in social theory. This is between those who hold a consensual model of society (consensus theory) and those who argue that conflict prodominates (conflict/coercion theory). The consensus view can be attributed to Parsonian functionalism, while the conflict approach can be traced back to Marx. These two schools differ in their answer to the Hobbesian question; Why does social order exist? The consensus theorists argue it is because of shared norms, values and beliefs whilst the conflict theorists suggest that it is because of conformity due to the threat of power by an elite group. This controversy was alluded to in Chapter One. Yet there are difficulties with both these views. The consensus theory and conflict theories have both been extensively criticised on many grounds. For our present purposes one simple criticism can be made of each approach.

The consensus theory assumes a total monolithic convergence of norms and values which, as we shall see later, appears to be at variance with the facts. On the other hand the conflict view by focusing upon the differentiation of norms and values can be said to underplay the extent to which the dominant value system actually wins acceptance. Thus we will seek to argue that the notion of hegemony remedies the deficiencies of both theories. It may be judged that the concept is closer to a conflict position yet it stands between both theories and to a certain extent acts as a bridge between them.

What, then, is to be understood by the term hegemony (egemonia)? It is defined by Williams (1960) in his introduction to Gramsci's use of the concept as,

"a 'moment', in which the philosophy and practice of a society fuse or are in equilibrium; an order in which a certain way of life and through is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society in all its institutional and private manifestations, informing with its spirit all taste, morality, customs, religious and political principles, and all social relations, particularly in their intellectual and moral connotation". (1960: 587)

It has also been defined in more succinct terms by Bates as meaning,

"political leadership based on the consent of the led, a consent which is secured by the diffusion and popularisation of the world view of the ruling class". (1975: 352)

We can examine these notions in more detail. Gramsci seems to be describing a situation in which a dominant class, which has control over the basic economic and political institution, attempts to utilise

its monopoly access to those institutions in order to propagate values and norms which reinforce its own position of dominance. This process has three basic facets. Firstly there is the dissemination of the values and norms favoured by the elite group; secondly there is the denial, refutation and ultimately censorship of beliefs, values and norms which threaten the position of the elite group; and finally there is the attempt to define and limit the parameters of permissible and normal discussion of beliefs, values and norms. The last of these facets thus corresponds to three dimensional notion of power described by Lukes (1974). Indeed Femia has suggested that Gramsci, "eventually came to view hegemony as the most important face of power". (1975: 31). Similarly Sallach has argued that the,

"most effective aspect of hegemony is found in the suppression of alternative views through the establishment of parameters which define what is legitimate, reasonable, sane, practical, good, true and beautiful". (1974: 41)

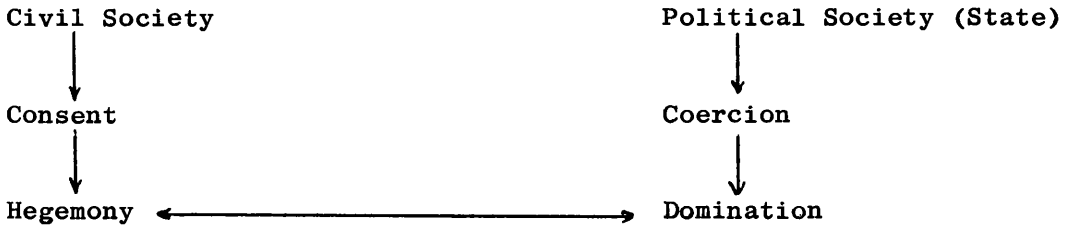
Obviously, as the notion of hegemony is so strongly rooted in the ideational 'corner', Gramsci was forced to re-appraise the Marxist concept of 'superstructure' and its relationship to the economic base. We have already seen that Gramsci adopted a more 'open' Marxism where the economic base sets a range of possible outcomes which are actually decided by ideological activity. As a result of his re-appraisal and his study of the role of intellectuals in society, Gramsci divided the superstructure into two parts which he described as 'civil society' and 'political society'. These have been described by Bates;

"Civil society is composed of all those 'private organisms' - schools, churchs, clubs, journals, and parties - which contribute in molecular

fashion to the formation of social and political consciousness. Political society, on the other hand, is composed of those public institutions - the government, courts, police and army - which exercise 'direct dominion'. It is synonymous with the 'state'". (1975: 353)

The dominant class exercise 'power' in both forms of society but at different times and by different methods. Civil society is the ideational field where the ruling class attempt to gain the consent of the ruled by the construction of an ideological hegemony. They therefore attempt to secure the 'free' consent of the masses to their domination. Where the hegemony breaks down, or is in danger of doing so, the ruling class will fall back upon the coercive power of the political society or state machinery in order to reassert its domination. Thus political society describes the realm of coercion. This can be illustred by Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6 The realms of hegemony and domination



Gramsci thus saw hegemony and domination as mutually related phenomena and suggested that while hegemony characterised bourgeois rule in an advanced capitalist society, it was always underpinned by economic domination which could be re-asserted in times of crisis.

We have seen that hegemony consists of rule via 'consent', but what is exactly meant by the term 'consent'? We can differentiate two separate

forms of consent. On the one hand there is 'active' consent which occurs when individuals totally internalise the dominant ideology. On the other hand there is 'passive' consent which occurs when individuals recognise the iniquity of the present state but are unable to envisage its replacement or indeed any viable alternative. The degree of social stability is obviously related to the degree of social consensus as reflected in the 'mix' of 'active' and 'passive' acceptance of the structure of domination. Gramsci acknowledges both forms of consent. For example, he characterises hegemony as the,

"spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group, consent 'historically' caused by the prestige (and therefore by the trust) accruing to the dominant group because of its position and function in the world of production". (1949: 9)

Elsewhere in his work he adopts a passive view of consent. As Femia has argued such passive consent,

"emerges not so much because the masses profoundly regard the social order as an expression of their aspirations as because they lack the conceptual tools, the 'clear theoretical consciousness', which would enable them effectively to comprehend and act on their discontent - discontent manifest in the activity uniting them 'in the practical transformation of reality'. (.....) The 'active man-in-the-mass' lacks the means with which to formulate the radical alternative 'implicit in his activity' (.....) The very framework for his analysis of the existing system is fixed by the dominant vision of the world. The apparent limits of the possible are defined by the existing order". (1975: 33)

Thus Gramsci sees consent as being both active and passive, and this is more easily understood if we also realise that he saw the values and norms of individuals as neither consistent, coherent, or constant. Gramsci viewed modern capitalist societies and their systems of economic dominance as no longer being able to ensure total acceptance and allegiance from the the masses. These systems were in a precarious position where social disintegration could easily occur. Within the consciousness of the average member of society "elements of intellectual and moral approbation coexist in unsteady equilibrium with elements of resignation and even hostility". (Femia 1975: 34). This is the balance of hegemony and consent.

Gramsci used the concept of hegemony to explain a phenomena which had worried him (as indeed it had worried others including Lenin). This was the 'apathy' and 'indifference' of the masses in the face of their economic subjugation. Gramsci explains this by arguing that the masses are not only dominated in an economic and coercive manner but are ideologically dominated and are therefore unable to see the true nature of their condition. To achieve revolution the ideological blindfold must be removed from the workers by 'proletarian intellectuals'. Thus 'false consciousness', which in terms of strict economic determinism is inexplicable, is illuminated by Gramsci's notion of hegemony.

An important point needs to be made at this juncture. This is that the concept of hegemony not only reflects the duality of action and structure but also the dichotomy of 'power' and 'consciousness' introduced in the prologue. This hegemony can on the one hand be considered as a form of a 'tool' of power. It can be used purposively on the level of action in order to create values and attitudes which do

not threaten the dominant group. It can also exist structurally tied in to the operation of a social elite and reflected in the very fabric of society. In order to demonstrate the existence of power as hegemony one needs direct evidence of its utilisation. This may be gained from the observation and examination of 'action' or from the analysis of 'structures'. On the other hand hegemony can be viewed as a 'result' of the operation of power thus describing the reactions of the subordinated to their domination or their state of 'consciousness'. The existence of certain forms of consciousness would therefore provide indirect evidence of the operation of hegemonic power.

In terms of the model of power to be advanced later in this work, the concept of hegemony will be treated as a 'form' or 'tool' of power and an attempt will be made to show how one management utilised such ideological hegemony as a power weapon. However, other researchers have considered the other facet of hegemony. Thus from Beynon's classic study of the Ford plant at Halewood emerged the existence of a specific 'factory consciousness'. According to Beynon this factory consciousness,

"understands class relationships in terms of their direct manifestations in conflict between the bosses and the workers within the factory. It is rooted in the workplace where struggles are fought over the control of the job and the 'rights' of managers and workers. In as much as it concerns itself with exploitation and power it contains definite political elements. But it is a politics of the factory".
(1973: 98)

From a study of auto workers at the General Motors plant at Framlingham, Massachusetts, Garson (1973) argues that they possess a 'multiple' consciousness. Thus,

"Rather than possessing a coherent ideology, whether reactionary, liberal, or radical, one finds them to be full of ambiguity and overlays of consciousness. Different and seemingly contradictory orientations will be evoked depending upon the context". (1973: 164)

Garson also notes an apparent dichotomy in that general surface level satisfaction is underlain by specific dissatisfaction with various aspects of the work situation. He thus argues that,

"The phenomenon of surface satisfaction veiling far-reaching sources of oppression reflects the need to reconcile oneself to 'what has to be done'". (1973: 173)

This then mirrors the notions of 'passive consent' (Gramsci) and 'pragmatic acceptance' (Mann 1970). In the same vein, Chinoy (1965) has demonstrated the existence of the ruling ideology of opportunity side-by-side with job aspirations and expectations quite at variance with it. Finally Garson links the overall expression of satisfaction to the inability to transcend the present situation induced by the hegemonic domination of thought. Thus he argues that,

"Satisfaction is perpetuated on a superficial but enduring basis by the absence of attractive models capable of raising expectations beyond the level presently satisfied by the firm". (1973: 174)

Nichols and Armstrong (1976) studied the ChemCo chemical plant in the south of England. They found that the

"Chemco workers are internally divided. They lack solidarity, are isolated from one another, are stratified by a grading system, lack experience of active trade unionism, and certainly lack any radical political tradition. Moreover, for them to develop a socialist consciousness would require the rejection of a whole 'commonsense' world of conventional (official) wisdom". (1976: 127)

They also found that the value system of the workers at ChemCo was characterised as inchoate, inconsistent and incomplete. Their work although not centrally related to power appears to find evidence and echoes of hegemony. Thus the authors state that,

"at least in the case of this apparently quiescent workforce, we see that the world of work is structured in such a way that workers can get little purchase on it". (1976: 16)

They also describe this situation in more detail. Thus,

"in order for workers to see politics and society in a different way to that projected by the dominant ideology - the way fostered and broadcast by the dominant class and institutions of this society - they have to negotiate a way through existing ideological structures. Whereas the structures are not 'suspended in mid-air', there is a sense in which they do not exist 'over the heads' of particular individuals; a sense in which they are given. They provide, if we can put it like this, readymade and well trodden thoughtways (.....) Such clusters of theory and value may not be entirely successful in directing activity toward the maintenance of the existing order but for those who wish to challenge it, they represent a conceptual miasma which it requires a very sharp knife to cut clearly through. (1976: 19)

This evidence on the inconsistencies and contradictions in value systems both demonstrates the attempt by the ruling elite to inculcate dominant values and at the same time the limits of such a hegemonic strategy. Thus in a situation where 'normal' values are 'squeezed' and 'challenged' by dominant values we would expect, not a value consensus to emerge, but a fragile quasi consensus, built upon both active and passive consent with perhaps the dominant values being 'taken' but not legitimised. Yet at the same time this demonstrates the limitations to hegemony in that it must be constantly re-affirmed and reproduced. This re-emphasises the need for attention to be paid to the study of ideological and hegemonic processes at the level of 'action' as well as at the level of 'structures'.

In order to recapitulate we can make several points about hegemony that have emerged from our discussion. Firstly, as we have seen, ideological hegemony is always partial, never absolute. Secondly the origins of such hegemony can be clearly traced to a specific situation of economic domination by a particular group. Finally, hegemony is not natural or spontaneous, but is the product of a continual process of production and reproduction.

4.5 Hegemony and domination in organisational life

We can now move our focus down to the level of organisation and seek to examine the ways in which ideological hegemony and domination are produced. The notion of rationality has been seen by some writers to be interwoven with such concepts as ideology, hegemony and domination. Weber has traditionally provided the starting point for any discussion of rationality by dividing social conduct into four forms, two of which he designated 'rational' and two 'non-rational'.

Instrumental rational (Zweckrational) conduct he defined as being,

"determined by expectations as to the behaviour of objects in the environment and of other human beings; these expectations are used as 'conditions' or 'means' for the attainment of the actor's own rationally pursued and calculated ends". (1948: 24)

Thus this form of rationality requires the choice between means in order to pursue a specific 'end' or 'goal'. On the other hand, value-rational (Wertrational) conduct is,

"determined by a conscious belief in the value for its own sake of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behaviour, independently of its prospects of success". (1948: 24-25)

What unites both forms of rational conduct is the connection between means and ends and the notion of choice.

In the organisational literature a notion of 'formal rationality' has arisen based upon the Weberian notions of instrumental rationality and bureaucracy. There appears to be two different interpretations of this 'formal rationality'. One sees it as the property of individuals who are seen to identify goals and then choose the most efficient of the available means in order to achieve them. The second view sees rationality as a property of organisations. Thus organisations are seen as having goals or objectives and to the extent that the behaviour of the individuals within them is perceived as 'in line' with these goals then it is seen as rational. Both these formulations have obvious problems especially the second which can be said to reify human motives to organisations. (For detailed criticisms see Argyris 1973, Brown 1978).

However what unites these two views is that they adopt, at different levels, Weber's notion of instrumental rationality and thus see actors as choosing effective means to achieve ends prior to action. Thus rationality is seen as prospective and an antecedent to action.

However these are not the only views of rationality. Recent work in the field of ethnomethodology has produced a third view. As Brown has argued, such studies have revealed the non-rational basis of much rational conduct. Thus,

"when subjected to micro analysis by ethnomethodologists, the supposedly rational procedures of formal organisations turn out to be absurd and yet, in their very absurdity to provide the rhetoric and rationale for their own legitimacy". (1978: 368)

Therefore rationality can be seen as retrospective rather than prospective. For,

"In theoretical as well as in detailed observational studies, Garfinkel and others have demonstrated how social actors employ rationality retrospectively as a rhetoric to account for actions that, from a rationalist point of view, were chaotic and stumbling when performed. Moreover, Garfinkel has shown this to be the case in the actor's lives, in their group processes, and in their roles as members or spokesmen of institutions". (1978: 369)

Thus rationality may not be a prior assessment but may instead emerge during or after any interaction. In this form, rationality may be used retrospectively to legitimise what has already happened or what is presently happening.

This concept is important for several reasons. Firstly it focuses our attention on the fact that rationality is socially constructed and is not absolute in any way. Thus rationality can be used by the dominant group to impose their definition of the situation upon a subordinate group. The notion of rationality has 'power' because people consider it to be neutral. Yet we have seen that it can be constructed 'post-hoc' to rationalise and legitimise that which has gone before. Therefore the dominant elite can use rationality to legitimise their rule. As Brown puts it,

"The study of reality creation is a study of power, in that definitions of reality, normalcy, rationality and so on serve as paradigms that in some sense govern the conduct permissable within them".(1978: 371)

Despite the fact that organisations are in a constant state of flux and can be viewed as a process of ongoing organising, the ruling group present a picture of the organisation as neutrally rational and as a static facticity.

Secondly it introduces the notion of rhetoric into our discussion. This is a useful term in our analysis of ideology, hegemony and domination. The notions of rhetoric and ideology have been outlined and distinguished by Ball (1967).

"Sociologically, a rhetoric is a vocabulary of limited purpose; that is to say, it is a set of symbols functioning to communicate a particular set of meanings, directed and organised toward the representation of a specific image or impression. Such vocabularies are not only verbal but also include visual symbols such as objects, gestures, emblems etc. As a theoretical point it should be noted

that rhetorics are not necessarily the same thing as ideologies, although this may empiricially be the case. The conceptual difference between the two is that rhetoric speaks to communication, both style and content, while ideology refers to perception and justification in terms of the ideologue's conception of the relevant portions of the world. It is quite conceivable that individual actors will utilise a rhetoric without any ideological convictions as regards its validity, but with a recognition of its pragmatic efficacy; and similarly, that ideological dedication does not automatically assume any developed rhetoric to attempt its maintenance or furtherance". (1967: 296)

In a later Chapter we will seek to demonstrate and describe how the management in the company which was studied for this thesis utilised rhetoric in order to create a form of ideological hegemony. The concept of rhetoric will be used to draw attention to the importance of linguistic resources in the workplace.

We have already seen how instrumental or means-end rationality can be used to provide a rhetoric for legitimising past conduct from the standpoint of ethnomethodology. However this is not the only branch of sociology which has focused upon the notion of rationality in a critical manner. Running parallel with the work of Garfinkel, we have the neo-Marxist or 'critical theorists' of the 'Frankfurt School' such as Marcuse (1964), Horkheimer (1974) and Habermas (1970) who have argued that the traditional notion of rationality has provided an instrument for technocratic domination. For these theorists rationality is used purposively as a prospective rhetoric for the restriction of alternative goals and for the advancement of the goals and agenda of the dominant group. This is what Lukes (1974) appears to be

referring to when he asks,

"..... is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial? (1974: 24)

Thus it may be suggested that organisations throughout the industrial world attempt to suppress the ability of their members to 'grasp' the reality of their positions. The members of such organisations work in 'blinkers' which prevent them from seeing or understanding alternatives to the present order. As Brown has put it;

"Members of such organisations are limited to mundane experience as it is predefined largely by the official categories of that system. (.....) In such systems the determinants of action are not freely accessible to the consciousness of the actors; they must act instead under intentions formed behind their backs". (1978: 372)

Another aspect of this argument is that the ruling class, by focusing attention upon the efficiency of various means via the notion of instrumental or technical rationality, can direct attention from the fact that certain ends serve their own interests.

Finally on a theoretical level, Brown (1978) has argued that organisations as entities can be viewed as paradigms in a manner analogous to the use of that term by Kuhn (1970). By paradigm, we refer to,

"those sets of assumptions, usually implicit, about what sorts of things make up the world, how they act, how they hang together, and how they may be known ... Paradigms, in other words, may be understood not only as formal rules of thought, but also as rhetoric and practices in use". (1978: 373)

Such paradigms can act as a control mechanism in that they define the nature and meaning of organisational life and as such form a legitimising ideology. Thus in any study of organisational power, attention should be directed to the process by which a powerful group imposes a paradigmatic reality and establishes an 'ideological hegemony'.

Most of the work on hegemony and domination has been located at a fairly macro level of analysis. Concepts such as rationality, ideology and rhetoric have been generally discussed in terms of hegemonic domination at the level of society. Very little work has so far been done on the ways in which an ideological hegemony is reproduced in industrial organisations. (This being one important reason why my empirical work was located in this arena). One of the few researchers to have paid attention to this area is Golding whose qualitative research work in the 'Electrical Contracting Company' and the 'Wemslow Manufacturing Company' is reported in a series of articles (Golding 1979, 1980a, 1980b). His work is obviously important in that it addresses centrally issues that are related to the concerns of this thesis. Yet it is possible to argue that he fails to develop a model which would enable the exploration of the process of domination within organisations.

The unifying theme of Golding's articles is that he variously terms the 'sovereignty of management', 'authority', 'legitimacy' and the

'right to manage'. Golding argues that the "'sovereignty of management' .... has important symbolic elements in industrial hierarchical organisations" (1979: 169) and "is symbolically tied to the way in which individuals structure and organise their worlds." (1979: 170). He suggests that the 'soveignty of management' is seen as 'given' and is therefore unquestioned. As a result many theories of power have been concerned to examine the 'need' of 'some' to 'control' others and have therefore missed the more hidden faces or facets of power. It is further argued that the 'sovereignty of management' provides a means whereby domination in the organisation is supported and acquires a symbolic permanence and that this structure of domination in the organisation creates and perpetuates the structure of dominancy in the wider society. Thus in a rather different and more 'micro' fashion, Golding attempts to link the notions of hegemony and domination and demonstrate the relationship between domination in organisations and in the wider society. Using specific qualitative data Golding seeks to illustrate his argument. From this data he concludes that,

"In the way that 'control', and those 'in control', remained elusive to 'K' (in Kafka's The Castle), so the structure of domination remains elusive to the employees of the Electrical Contracting Company." (1979: 175)

Golding also seeks to argue that one of the symbolic elements which helps to perpetuate the structure of domination is the fact that because issues are personalised and related to one person (the managers) then this person can be fallible and thus replaced without undermining the structure of managerial authority itself.

In a later paper Golding addresses a topic that we have already raised in this chapter. That is the use of a form of rationality as a prospective rhetoric for the restriction of alternative courses of action and for the advancement of the goals and agenda of the dominant group. Golding, however, seeks to illustrate this process at the micro level by use of qualitative data. Thus Golding suggests that his paper,

"examines one such example of the process of abstraction and simplication involving the production of an 'absolute' as a transformation of a 'possible', and of the 'erecting of barriers' to prevent access to the derivation of the absolute and thereby to alternative 'possibles'". (1980b: 764)

The example in question is, of course, the 'sovereignty of management' or the 'right to manage'. Golding argues that this notion is related historically to a specifically advantageous division of labour.

"Thus the originally perceived economically advantageous division of labour has been transformed into an absolute, and is maintained as an absolute by the very structure of domination produced, whereby certain members have more control over the transformation process and the blocking of access to derivations. The idea of 'some' having control over 'others' suggests an acceptance of the principle of control as a fundamental component of organisational life, and this acceptance is clearly grounded in a belief that it is 'the done thing', and part of 'what everybody knows'". (1980b: 772-773)

However it is obvious that the notion of the sovereignty of management is not an 'absolute' or 'given' but is a 'myth' in that it is only one of many possibilities but it endures because a rhetoric has enabled

the other possibilities to be 'closed-off'.

What then, does Golding's work tell us about managerial domination within organisations? Whilst he may be said to draw attention to the symbolic nature of the 'sovereignty of management' he does not really explain the various ways in which domination is constructed and re-produced. Several specific criticisms can be made. Firstly, the precise nature of his data collection method is unclear. It appears as though his qualitative research data was collected while he was a member of the organisations described. However it is left unexplicated and one does not know whether this was 'full organisational membership' or a more temporary 'research membership'. The research data is presented in a series of 'scenarios' which on occasion appear rather anecdotal. It is also unclear whether the (sometimes detailed) interactions reported in the scenarios were tape-recorded or merely recalled from memory. A second major criticism is that Golding develops no framework or model which would enable the reader to understand the operation of ideological hegemony at the organisational level. Thus Golding proceeds directly from his scenarios to assertions of managerial dominance without the use of any conceptual apparatus. Therefore the way in which the ideological hegemony is sustained remains stubbornly unexplicated. Finally Golding's work focuses upon the way in which the 'sovereignty of management' is reflected in organisational life but ignores the many ways in which it is purposively created by managerial action involving the use of rhetoric, ideology and rationality.

Returning to the theoretical level several writers have discussed the various control strategies that are available to management in order

to maintain their power. Friedman (1977) has identified two alternative strategies for dealing with worker resistance to domination and the problem of labour force co-ordination. The first of these is the 'direct control' strategy. This involves,

"maximising the separation of conception from execution of work tasks for the vast majority of workers, the centralisation of conceptual activities into few hands closely related to those with high managerial status, and the maintenance of managerial authority through close supervision and financial incentives: in short the Taylorian ideal of scientific management". (1977: 48)

The second, and opposite strategy, is that of 'responsible autonomy'. This involves,

"allowing individual workers or groups of workers a wide measure of discretion over the direction of their work tasks and the maintenance of managerial authority by getting workers to identify with the competitive aims of the enterprise so that they will act 'responsibly' with a minimum of supervision". (1977: 48)

Thus the 'direct control' strategy aims to restrict labour power by use of the coercive and remunerative power available to managements to use Etzioni's terms (Etzioni 1961). Thus management might use the threat of coercion, restrictive and 'tight' supervision and intensive control systems. In contrast the 'responsible autonomy' strategy attempts to utilise the flexibility of labour's power by the use of moral or normative power. Thus,

"top managers give workers status, authority, responsibility and try to win their loyalty and co-opt their organisations to the firm's ideals (that is, competitive struggle) ideologically". (1977; 49)

Friedman also draws attention to the useful distinction between workers who are 'central' and those who are 'peripheral'. Central workers are those who, through their skills or position, are essential to the organisation or alternatively are those whose potential resistance ensures their 'crucialness' to it. Friedman seeks to argue that management will tend to use different control strategies for these different groups.

The difference between 'direct control' and 'responsible autonomy' mirrors a distinction that I wish to make later in this work between the use of 'physical' resources on the one hand and 'linguistic' resources on the other.

Five different managerial control and power strategies have been identified by Goldman and Van Houten (1977). Firstly they identify the division of labour into specific tasks as one form of control. This, of course, relates indirectly to Friedman's 'direct control' and to the theory of 'scientific management'. (See Braverman 1974, Marglin 1974). Secondly they identify the use of organisational hierarchy as a managerial strategy. As Goldman and Van Houten argue,

"Hierarchy and the concept of a claim of command supports super-specialization by isolating workers from one another and from management. Hierarchical distinctions, emphasizing individual rather than collective rewards, exemplify the social control function of corporate firms. Individualism, invidious comparison of status and salary, and consumerism mutually reinforce hierarchy". (1977; 116)

In a similar manner to Golding (1980b), Goldman and Van Houten suggest that the concept of hierarchy occupies a symbolic or mythical role in

organisations. It provides the illusion, if not the reality, of upward social mobility for workers. Failure to rise through the hierarchy thus becomes an individual rather than a systemic manifestation. Hence attention is diverted to the failings of individuals rather than to the arbitary nature of hierarchy itself. Thirdly Goldman and Van Houten suggest that rules, regulations and supervision can comprise the 'hegemony of bureaucratic procedure'. Hence it is argued that rules and procedures which appear to be simple neutral attempts to rationalise work are, in fact, instruments of social control. The fourth managerial control strategy consists of secrecy and the hoarding of knowledge while the final strategy involves the creation of secondary labour markets, discrimination against ethnic minorities and the sexual division of labour. These five strategies can be seen to focus upon the structural level of domination and upon the creation of an ideological hegemony.

Clegg has attempted to take these strategies of managerial control and link them back into discussions about power and domination. (Clegg 1979; Clegg and Dunkerley 1980). As we have already seen Clegg uses the notion of rule to mediate between power on the surface level of appearances and domination on a deeper structure level. Three forms of rule are identified, technical rules, social-regulative rules and 'extra' - organisational rules. The notion of technical rules is similar to Friedman's concept of 'direct control' and, on a certain level, to the first three of Goldman and Van Houten's strategies. Social-regulative rules are seen by Clegg in a manner similar to Friedman's notion of 'responsible autonomy'. Thus economic domination and coercion is replaced by ideological hegemony and integration.

Clegg and Dunkerley see the recent work humanization and quality of working life movement as an example of such a process. Thus participation and job enrichment experiments are,

"Clearly intended to change the surface structure of power relationships between management and labour whilst leaving the underlying structure of social relationships and hegemony intact. Indeed, what is lost by management hierarchically will be more than gained hegemonically, to the extent that 'interest' is generally attached to the profitability of the enterprise". (1980: 516)

Finally 'extra' - organisational rules refer to such things as the division of labour on grounds of sex or race.

4.6 A new approach to the concept of power

In this Chapter we have attempted to explore and examine some themes which we have suggested are related to power and which we propose to use in the development of a model of power. At this stage we can perhaps recapitulate the main points of our discussion in order to lay out the basis for our model.

During the chapter three different levels of social life were identified. These were the levels of action, mediation and structure. It was then possible, by this notion of independent but interrelated levels, to transcend the persistent and confusing duality of action and structure. Power was therefore not to be found at the level of structure on the level of action in isolation, but instead existed at different times and in different forms at all three levels. Thus the fluid, processual and complex nature of power could be captured. Two different forms of power were then delineated and tied to particular

levels of social experience. Firstly power is transformative capacity which is located at the action level and secondly power as a structure of domination. These two different views are related via the concept of resources. Resources are the media through which transformative capacity is utilised but at the same time are structural elements, the distribution of which reflects the prevailing structure of domination. Thus the exercise of transformation capacity is contrained by the prevailing structure of domination while at the same time constituting or reproducing that structure. Finally we have considered the ways in which an ideological hegemony can be created and used to preserve the structure of domination and identified the importance of the concepts of rationality and rhetoric. We now need to consider how these elements can be integrated and related in a coherent model which might provide a sound basis for a better understanding of the operation of power in the workplace and remedy some of the previously identified deficiencies of earlier theories.

The understanding of power that I wish to propose is represented in Figure 4.7. This represents and encompasses the elements and dimensions that are involved in different ways in the operation, exercise and process of power. Following Giddens, three levels of social life are identified and related to the three facets of power that we have already discussed. However some differentiation is made both at the level of resources and domination. Resources can be divided into those resources which are physical in one sense or another and those which are linguistic. They also form the means by which the meaningful and normative aspects of interaction are actualised. Domination, as we have seen, describes a situation of assymetry of resources and therefore can be either economic domination imposed

via coercion or hegemonic domination imposed by consent.

However the process of interaction does not solely consist of the operation of power. As Giddens has noted it also has two other elements. These are elements concerning its meaning and normative elements. These are represented in the last two columns of the diagram. Transformative capacity is rendered meaningful by the use of rhetoric and argument whilst domination is sustained by ideological means including the use of rationality. Mediating between rhetoric and ideology is the concept of 'legitimising principles'. Thus Armstrong, Goodman and Hyman argue that in,

"any cultural setting there are certain acceptable motives for action (what we will call 'legitimising principles') which are, in turn embedded in the characteristic world view (ideology) of that culture". (1981: 36)

These legitimising principles are obviously related to linguistic resources and are in certain facets similar to Giddens' notion of 'interpretive schemes'. Legitimising principles are articulated at the level of action as rhetoric.

Finally we have the normative elements of interaction. In this sense norms are seen as either enabling or constraining interaction. Norms are embedded in, and drawn from, the legitimate order, and yet by their use actually reproduce that order. Sanctions, of various types, can be seen as the means, at the level of action, whereby norms are upheld. Thus sanctions can be related to forms of resources. A classification of sanctions could, of course, be constructed based upon the elements used to produce the sanctioning effect.

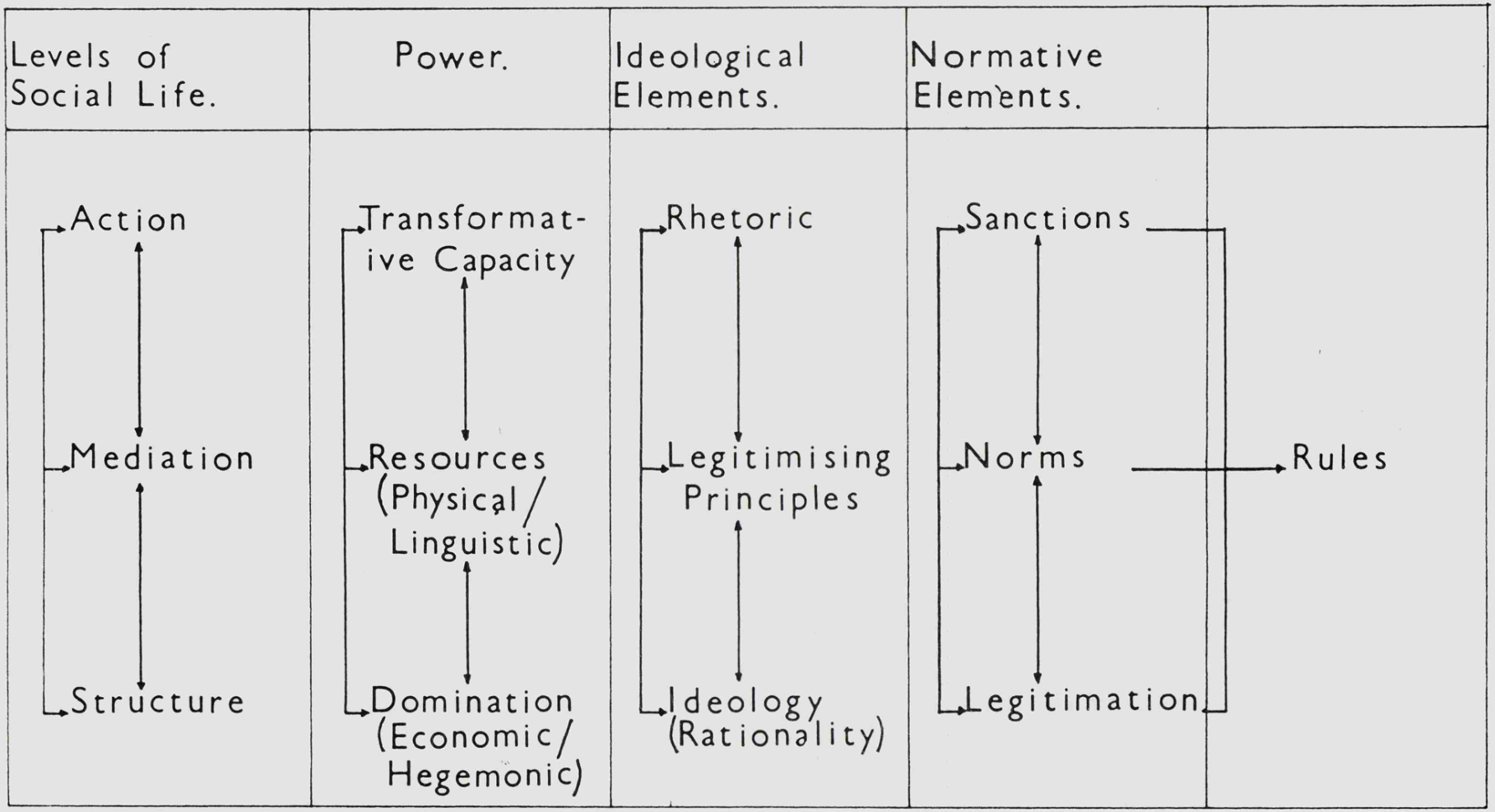


Figure 4·7 An Alternative Model of Power.

The diagram can also be read horizontally to show the relations between the elements of interaction (power, ideological, normative) at different levels of social life. Thus, power as transformative capacity involves action and the utilization of rhetoric and sanctions in order to achieve a result or change an outcome. Transformative capacity is thus dependent upon the use of resources which can include physical or linguistic elements. The linguistic elements are 'legitimising principles' and 'social norms'. We can see that resources, legitimising principles and norms are drawn from a structure of domination in the form of an assymetry of economic resources, a mode of rationality or a legitimate order respectively. Finally it will be argued that in the industrial relations context the process of interaction (and thus power) is centrally related in one way or another to the production of 'rules'.

In what senses is the model developed here different to the previous theories of power that have been described in this work? This can be answered by returning to the criticisms that were advanced earlier in terms of both epistemology and theoretical concerns. As we have seen, most of the theories of power described have been 'structural' in terms of epistemology and methodology and have therefore been located within the radical structuralist or functionalist paradigms. These theories adopted a positivist epistemology and a nomothetic methodology and can therefore be classifed as 'structural' or 'objectivist' in approach. Yet on another level most of the previous theories of power were 'action' based on behavioural. Thus they focused upon observable behaviour in the form of decision-making and its outcomes and tended to ignore the structural level of domination. These theories have been criticised for restricting themselves to the level

of surface appearances.

The importance of the model of power advanced in this work is that it seeks to depart from these established foci. This is proposed in two different ways. Firstly in terms of epistemology and methodology an attempt is made to direct attention towards the possibilities offered by the subjectivist positions. Secondly the model aims to illuminate the role played by structure in the operation of power. Thus, it seeks to move from a total preoccupation with action in the form of observable decisions to an equal focus upon structure in terms of the production and re-production of domination. The model thus seeks to create a rapprochement between the previously mutually exclusive action and structural approaches.

The benefits of the model can also be illustrated by a return to the issues surrounding power theorizing which were raised in the first Chapter. On a whole series of 'issues' the model enables the theorist to acknowledge that both forms of power may exist. Thus, obviously the model addresses both behavioural and structural conceptions of power. It resolves the old dilemma as to whether power exists only in its exercise or as a potential. Power can thus be seen in terms of its exercise as transformative capacity while the notions of resources and domination draw attention to the possibility of power as a potential force. Again, whilst power as transformative capacity will generally be observable in the form of decisions and outcomes, power as domination may, in Lukes' three dimensional sense, be 'hidden' from view. The model also encompasses both intended and unintended manifestations of power as well as both legitimate and illegitimate forms.

On the questions of whether power is intercursive or integral and whether conflict is necessary for power to exist the model enables the opposing views to be seen as appropriate in different senses. Thus a situation of domination by an elite group can co-exist with a situation of surface level pluralism, the two forms of power being located on different levels of social life. Secondly while the model assumes a basic structural economic conflict between 'rulers' and 'ruled', the conflict is not always manifest at the level of action. Thus it is possible for a situation of 'power' to exercise in the absence of immediate conflict but this could only be explicated by reference to the operation of power as domination and hegemony. One great advantage of the model is that it moves away from the association of power with causation and its associated problems and focuses instead upon social interaction. Finally it should be noted that the model confines itself to resources bases (whatever their form) although it could be extended to consider the motive bases for compliance.

One next objective is to consider the extent to which this model can enable us to understand the operation of power with the industrial relations context and specifically in terms of power in workplace industrial relations. We can facilitate this by considering each part of the model in turn. On the level of action, power as transformative capacity refers to the ability of actors to alter the course of events by intervention. To what does this correspond in the industrial relations field? The answer would appear to be the creation of rules. All the three major theoretical strands in industrial relations base a focus in this area. The systems approach has as its central focus the creation of rules, while the 'Oxford' approach also focuses upon

the processes of job regulation. The action approach according to Schienstock concerns the "analysis of the decision situation of the various actors". (1981: 174). Even the Marxist approach has a concern in this area. Hyman has defined industrial relations as "the study of processes of control over work relations" (1975: 12). This is again a focus (albeit in a very different way) upon the processes of decision making with organisations. Thus power as transformative capacity refers in industrial relations to the ability of actors to influence or make decisions which alter the course of events or the status quo. These decisions or rules are of course of substantive or procedural nature. Thus if we were to concentrate upon power in this form we would wish to examine which actors influenced or took decisions and which actors were able to ensure that rules or decisions taken were in line with their goals or objectives. If the work on power in the industrial relations context is reviewed it can be seen that this is the traditional and common approach. Thus Poole focuses upon,

"the levels at which decision-making takes place, the ranges and scope of issues influenced by the respective parties, and the outcome of particular power conflicts in which sanctions are employed". (1976: 33)

Abell and his team also focus upon decision making. For Abell the power of an actor refers to his ability to obtain his preferred outcomes, when facing competing preferred outcomes. Thus Abell focuses upon observable decisions, identifiable decision-makers and on observable conflicts of interest between them. Using Abell's model in the industrial relations context Edwards measures power by reference to decisions 'won' in the process of conflict between the

parties. Thus in the industrial relations arena the operation of power as transformative capacity involves attempts to create or charge rules. These attempts are reinforced by the use of rhetoric and sanctions. Rhetoric would in this sense cover concepts such as 'negotiating skill', 'personal power' and charisma.

The level of mediation consists of the control of resources. Resources are both the means by which transformative capacity is utilised and at the same time, in their distribution, expressions of the structure of domination. There exist at this level two types of resources. Firstly, and most commonly described, are physical resources. Thus French and Raven (1959) suggest that the ability to exercise power (in our sense of transformative capacity) can be based upon rewards, coercion, position in the organisation, personal charisma and special knowledge and skills. Similarly Etzioni (1961) distinguishes coercive power, remunerative power and normative power. Pfeffer (1981) lists such resources as money, prestige, legitimacy, rewards, sanctions and expertise. He also begins to discuss some resources which are wider in scope. These include dependencies, control of uncertainty and substitutability or irreplacability. It would appear, however, that there is some conceptual confusion here. Some of these resources are obviously physical in that they consist of 'things' such as money or position or 'negative things' such as sanctions which involve the withdrawal of a reward. Others are physical in the sense that they are tangible and measurable and can be used as threats in order to achieve one's own objectives. These would include substitutability and control of uncertainty. Yet there are others which should be included in a separate category. These can be termed linguistic resources and would include parts' of Etzioni's normative power and

French and Raven's category of personal characteristics. This area has recently been the subject of attention. In their study of rule making and rule changes Armstrong, Goodman and Hyman (1981) identify the crucial role played by what they term 'legitimising arguments'. Of course they are not the first theorists to consider the role of such legitimising arguments. Thus Bachrach and Baratz (1962) refer to the 'mobilisation of bias' in decision making; Walton and McKersie (1965) refer to 'attitudinal structuring' as a stage of the bargaining process and Fox (1971) to the 'ideologies of management and collectivities' which constitute a resource in the power struggle.

Armstrong et al (1981) argue that in,

"any cultural setting there are certain acceptable motives for action (what we will call 'legitimising principles') which are, in turn, embedded in the characteristic world view (ideology) of that culture" (1981: 36)

Thus representatives of both workers and management must link their policies and proposed rule changes to acceptable motives which already exist in the cultures of their constituents. There are several key points that need to be made at this stage. Firstly 'legitimising principles' or 'vocabularies of motive' are embedded in a more macro level ideology which is more or less comprehensive and stable. The largely micro level legitimising principles are issue specific and not totally general in application. Secondly there are two dimensions to legitimising principles. Firstly the mobilisation dimension where the representative attempts to convince his constituents and secondly the tactical dimension where the representative attempts to convince the group (or groups) opposing him.

In situations where legitimacy is contested, there may well be both public and private aspects to legitimisation. As Armstrong et al suggest,

"Suppose, for example, that a worker objects to a new management rule but can find no publicly acceptable legitimising principle to justify his objection. However personally aggrieved he may feel, there is then no way of mobilising his colleagues' support on the issue. It is even possible for such feelings to be shared, for a group of workers to feel individually ill-used, but, unless there is some means of transforming their private grievances into a public issue, they will not be able to mobilise effectively". (1981: 37)

Finally when a rule is created or changed the legitimising principle which 'lost' does not disappear but remains for future conflicts over this issue. This is similar to the position of power in general terms. If one party 'loses' an issue it does not mean that they do not have any power; it simply means that the other party had more. Thus as Armstrong et al argue, "the practical legitimisation of an operational rule is generally a question of degree" (1981: 38). To return to our starting point, the level of mediation thus consists of control over resources. Such resources are either physical or linguistic in the form of legitimising arguments or principles. These legitimising principles are then used to reinforce power as transformative capacity. However they arise in part from the structure of dominancy and are thus a component part of the ideology at the macro level.

Whilst both physical power resources and legitimising principles are located at the same level in our model they are used in slightly different ways.

Physical resources are 'possessed' in a fairly static and stable way and can be mobilised over a variety of 'issues'. However the question as to which 'issues' or conflicts between the parties are taken up and become 'live' is explained by reference to the role of legitimating arguments. Thus only those issues for which strong legitimising arguments exist will be taken up by the parties. As Armstrong et al argue,

"By suggesting issues on which one's own side can be mobilised and one's opponents ideologically out-manoeuvered, so to speak, the available legitimising principles serve to channel the application of power". (1981: 38)

Legitimisation therefore shapes the issues on which power is deployed. In another sense, the tactical and strategic deployment of legitimising arguments may actually be used instead of the exercise of power itself.

The structural level of our model is represented by domination which involves, "asymmetrics of resources employed in the sustaining of power relations". (Giddens 1979: 93). This concept is obviously related to the radical or marxist notions of power that we have already discussed. This view can be illustrated by Fox's comment that society is best described,

"in terms of the over-arching exploitation of one class by another, of the propertyless by the propertied of the less by the more powerful". (1973: 308-309)

Industrial relations is simply another arena in which this asymmetry of resources is manifested. Thus in a similar manner to Dunlop's

treatment of power, domination is seen not to exist in isolation in the industrial relations sphere but is instead partially a reflection of the situation in the wider society.

Domination can, of course, take on economic or hegemonic form. In its hegemonic form it is closely related to the concept of ideology. At this structural level we refer to ideology as ideology; a set of values and beliefs which sustain and rationalise forms of domination. As Giddens has argued,

"To study ideology from this aspect is to seek to identify the most basic structural elements which connect signification and legitimation in such a way as to favour dominant interests". (1979: 191-192)

To what do these concepts of hegemony, ideology and rationality refer in terms of the industrial relations arena and the workplace? The dominant group is the management of the firm or enterprise. Whilst their dominance is ensured by the asymmetry of economic resources in the long term, it has to be constantly re-produced and re-inforced daily, by ideational means. Thus a managerial ideology is created which produces a sense of legitimacy and shapes meanings in such a way as to preserve the status quo. The managerial ideology thus attempts to assert the 'naturalness' or 'efficiency' of managerial dominance. In this way a situation of hegemony is created whereby workers are prevented from challenging the bases of their domination. In so far as the legitimising principles and arguments of management are drawn from the dominant ideology then they are generally superior. Thus the workers face both an asymmetry of physical and linguistic resources.

Hegemony at the workplace is therefore manifested in such notions as 'Managerial prerogative', the 'sovereignty of management', the 'right to manage' and 'managerial authority'. On different levels these general ideological beliefs will be found used in particular forms as legitimising arguments and expressed within the rhetoric used by management.

The central thrust of this Chapter and of our model of power is neatly summarised by Clegg when he suggests that,

"individual power relations are only the visible tip of a structure of control, hegemony, rule and domination which maintains its effectiveness not so much through overt action, as through its ability to appear to be the natural convention. It is only when control slips, assumptions fail, routines lapse and 'problems' appear that the overt exercise of power is necessary. And that is exerted in an attempt to reassert control. (Clegg 1979: 147)

It is to the ways in which one management attempts to sustain such hegemony and domination that we now turn our attention.

Chapter 5

Bestobell Mobrey Limited

Background and Methodology

5.1 Bestobell Mobrey Limited

Having decided to study the operation of power within the workplace, the first question to be considered was the choice of a research site. What type of company, plant and indeed industry would be suitable for such a study? As the purpose of the research was to attempt an understanding of power within the workplace and develop a model of power which might be of general applicability, it appeared that there were few constraints. If one accepts, as I do, that power is an innate element of social interaction, then almost any situation could be examined. Yet I wished to exclude certain types of situation. Even at this early stage in the research process, I was sure that power could not simply be represented on the level of surface appearances. Thus it was not necessary to study a plant where there were plenty of 'issues' and a good deal of conflict. In fact my early concerns had instead been with workgroups who did not exercise power in a situation despite the possession of a structural power base. Power could be studied even in the absence of 'anything happening' in the normal sense. I was also concerned not to perpetuate the prevalent tradition in industrial relations research, which appears to regard large engineering or vehicles plants with fully developed shop steward networks, highly unionised workforces and developed collective bargaining arrangements as typical (Cf Batstone, Boraston and Frankel, 1977). Plants of less than 1,000 employees are generally ignored in the literature, despite the fact that around two-thirds of manufacturing employees work in plants of this size. Moreover, most studies of power in the workplace tend to focus upon observable conflict in the form of articulated 'issues' which enter the bargaining arena and upon the degree to which the parties achieve their goals and objectives in relation to these 'issues' (Cf Edwards 1975, 1978).

Yet it may equally be argued that smaller plants with unorganised and quiescent workforces may provide equally, if not more interesting, insights into the concept of power. A more practical constraint on choice was the problem of access to a research site. Always a difficult problem, this was likely to be exacerbated by the prolonged nature of the research involvement, the specific nature of the research methodology and the part-time status of the researcher.

After discussions with various companies I was eventually introduced, by a colleague, to Mr. P.G.D. Naylor, the Group Personnel Manager of Bestobell Limited. As a result of an initial meeting, a subsidiary company, Bestobell Mobrey Limited, was selected as being appropriate to my research interests and therefore contact was made with Mr. K.A. Mackney, Personnel Manager for Bestobell Mobrey. Bestobell Mobrey is one of the major manufacturing units within Bestobell Limited. Bestobell Limited is an international group operating in the United Kingdom and Continental Europe, Australia, South and Central Africa, North America and South East Asia. (See Figure 5.1 for breakdown of the structure of Bestobell Limited). The Group's activities can be broken down into three major areas; Engineering, Chemicals and Consumer Products. In the Engineering field the work of the Group can be divided into three categories. Firstly, there is manufacturing. Bestobell manufactures products mainly concerned with the transmission and control of fluids, and thermal and acoustic insulation. These include valves; pipeline fittings, boiler, liquid level and process controls; flow measurement and control; temperature controls, steam traps and ancillary equipment; air conditioning controls; acoustic enclosures; industrial seals; aircraft components and ducting systems. Secondly, there is the Merchanting business.

On a worldwide basis Bestobell provides a distribution network, which is strongly developed overseas, for equipment biased towards pipeline requirements and insulation products. This business operates in its own right, but also provides a supplementary means of promotion and distribution for some of the Group's manufactured products. Finally, there are the contracting activities which are mainly concerned with thermal insulation (marine and land) and the maintenance of industrial plant and control equipment, but some overseas companies carry out engineering, air conditioning and other related forms of contracting.

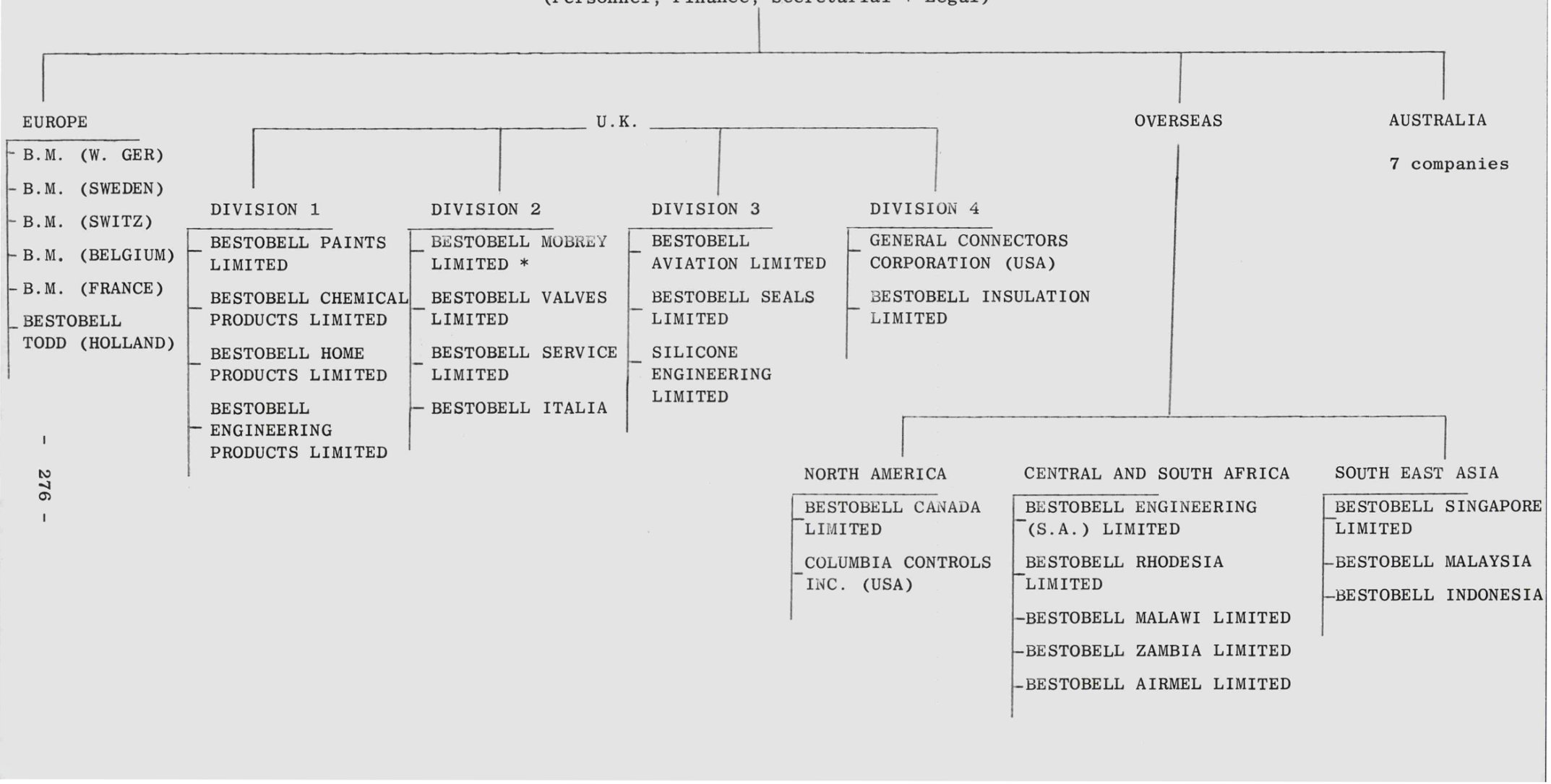
Bestobell also manufactures and distributes a range of paints, surface coatings and wood preservatives for industrial and domestic users; solvents and surface treatment products for industrial, marine and institutional applications; venetian and roller blinds and waste disposal units.

Bestobell's products are sold to almost every industry. The Group's engineering components, both of own manufacture and those from agency principles, are sold to original equipment manufacturers such as the mechanical handling, mining and earth moving equipment, the automotive and aviation industries, through to products for primary installation in major projects in the chemical, petro-chemical and power generation fields. Engineering components and services are supplied for factory maintenance and the extension of factory services, covering all industrial users from large chemical plants and mining operations to engineering marine supplies for the off-shore oil and gas industries. The Group is a major supplier to the process industry including food, steel, chemical, industrial gases, petro-chemical, ship building, power generation, water supplies and sewerage services.

Figure 5.1

Bestobell Limited 1973

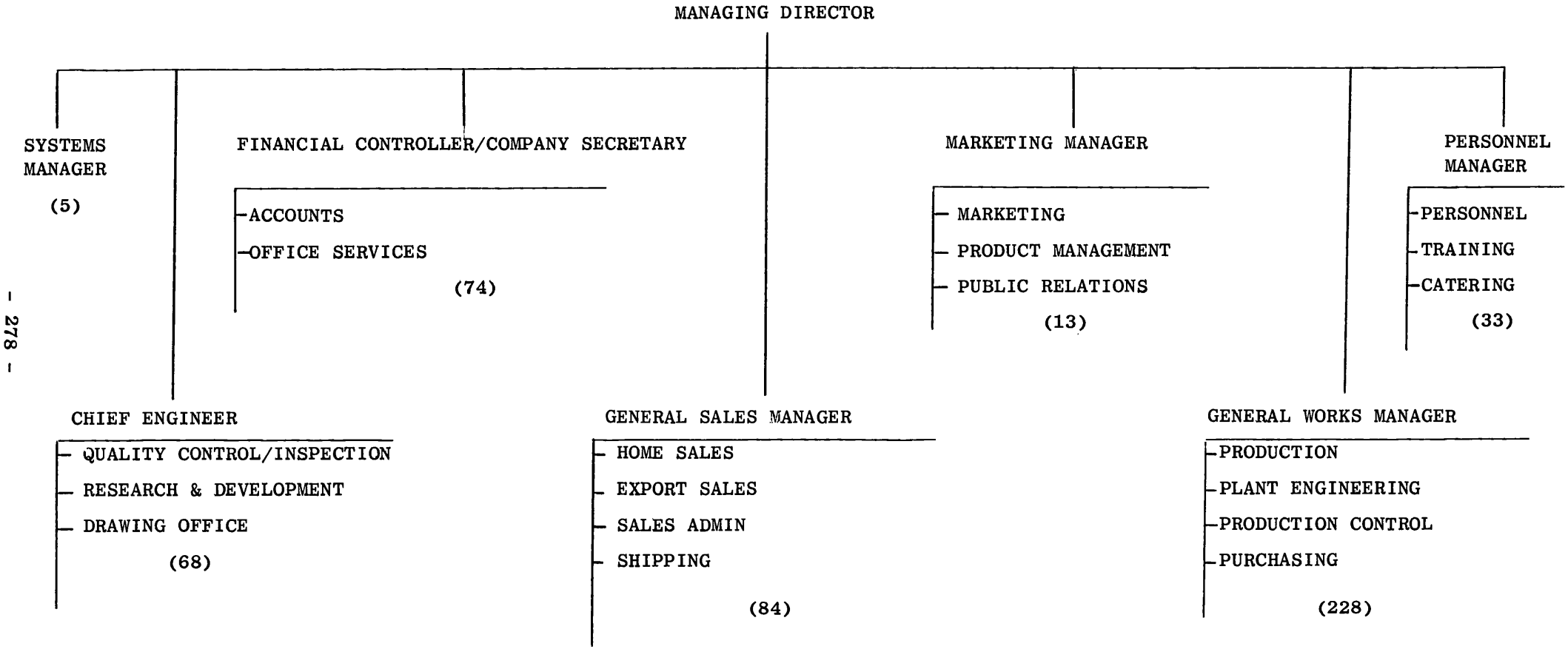
Group Headquarters



Bestobell Mobrey, as has already been mentioned, is one of the main manufacturing units of Bestobell Limited and is located upon the Slough Trading Estate. Bestobell Mobrey has a quite diverse product group within the general fluid engineering area. Basically there can be said to be three product families. Firstly, there are the Boiler Controls which consist of water level controls and low water alarms. Secondly, one can distinguish the Electro-Mechanical family comprising magnetic level switches, vertical reed switches and magnetic safety switches. Finally, and most recently, come the Ultrasonic control systems based upon the 'doppler effect'. This term refers to the change in the perceived frequency of a wave which results when the observer moves relatively to the source. Thus the ultrasonic control systems are attached to a pipe and can measure the flow of materials (solids, gases, or liquids) within it by emitting and receiving sonic impulses and measuring the distortion. The Boiler control product family is the oldest and is now in decline and largely restricted to the U.K. and 'Old Commonwealth' countries. The Electro-Mechanical level/ switch market is fairly stable but growth is not envisaged. There is a steady replacement market which aids sales. The level of sales of safety switches has shown an increase as a result of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Finally the Ultrasonics market is in its introduction and growth stage and it is expected that this side of the business will become increasingly dominant. In 1978 Mobrey had an overall market share in the UK for all products of 40% and approximately 20% in the world market. Export sales accounted for roughly 65% of volume in the same year.

The internal organisational structure of Bestobell Mobrey can be seen in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 Bestobell Mobrey organisation chart 1978



(Numbers in parentheses refer to employees in each area).

As can be seen the company has a total labour force of approximately 500 of which around 180 are direct production operatives. This balance reflects the particular nature of Bestobell Mobrey's products. Because of the rather unusual nature of Mobrey's business we need to examine some of the Departments in more detail before moving on to the focus of the research study; that is the production area.

As Figure 5.2 shows the Chief Engineer is responsible for a large number of staff. The Function is broken down into five major areas. The Model Workshop manufactures specimens, samples and design 'mock-ups' and consists of very skilled craftsmen. The Quality Department is responsible for the control of the quality of all raw materials as well as the assurance of the quality of the finished products. As customers' requirements and specifications become more rigorous then this is an increasingly important area. The New Product Research Engineer is responsible for the production of new product ideas and liaison with the academic sector. Product Development is split into electrical and mechanical areas each headed by a highly qualified (PhD) engineer and is responsible for bringing new product ideas to the development stage. Products are then taken over by Marketing who gain Government approvals and standards and are then sold by the Sales Department. Finally there is the Drawing Office containing around 30 staff.

The Sales function is split into the home and export markets. The UK market is divided into regions geographically plus a special division for petro-chemical sales. The fields sales teams are backed up by technical service staff based at Slough. The Export Sales Department is split up again on a geographical basis and is controlled by two

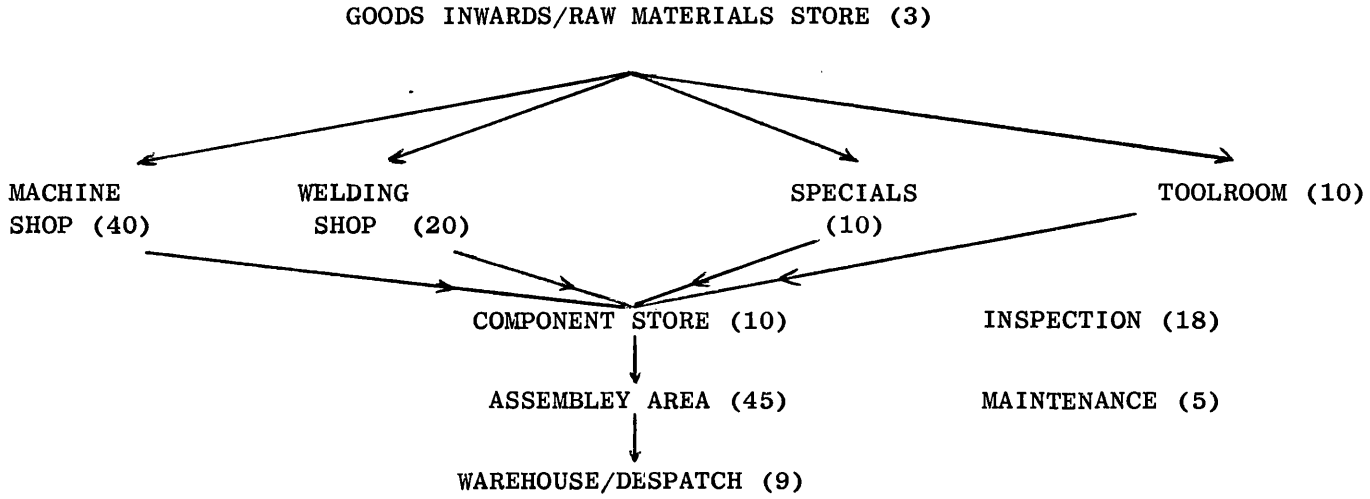
regional sales managers. The sales force is again supported by internal sales staff located elsewhere on the Slough Trading Estate. Exports are either direct or are conducted via agents and distributors and encompass around 60 countries.

The structure of the Production Function can be seen from Figure 5.3. The Machine Shop can be divided up into several different sections containing different types of machines. Firstly there is the automatics section which contains numerically controlled and computer controlled automatic machines such as Batchmatics, Cimex, Rotary Transfer and other automatics. Secondly there is the Capstan section. Thirdly the Milling machines and lastly the Drilling section. The Specials department produces small batch and 'one-off' work both for internal use and customer requirements. The Welding Shop produces high quality welding work to Lloyds standards. The tool room consists of seven toolmakers plus supervision, all of whom are on weekly staff. The Assembly area houses the only female operatives in the Production Department. This area contains approximately 7 fitter/assemblers (male) and around 20 female assemblers as well as packers and labourers. Finally the Stores (Raw materials, Components and Finished Stock) consists of storekeepers, warehousemen, packers and van drivers.

Bestobell Mobrey is interesting in terms of its manual workforce. Despite employing engineering workers and being located on a trading estate alongside other companies with substantial union presences, Bestobell Mobrey does not recognise any trade unions and indeed appears to have few workers within the plant who are union members. There have been several tentative approaches by trade unions and one request for recognition but these have been rejected by the management and unsupported by the vast majority of the workforce.

Figure 5.3 Production Department Organisation Plan

(Numbers of staff in parentheses)



The payment system in operation at the time of the research study consisted of six grades for the manual (non-staff) workers. Jobs were evaluated by a grading committee and allocated to one of the grades with grade 6 being the highest and grade 1 the lowest. (See Figure 5.4 for details). Each grade also had a series of incremental steps within it which were labelled A to D. D was the lowest point within a grade and all new workers to the company or to that grade started on that level. After a probationary period, the worker was usually moved up the grade to point C. After that progression was based upon performance and merit and was decided by the departmental manager.

In addition to the basic wage structure a series of bonus schemes were adopted and then replaced. In September 1978 management introduced a two part Productivity Scheme which they argued would enable workers to increase their earnings by between £7 and £10 per week. The first part consisted of an Attendance Bonus. This comprised a £1 per day bonus for attendance payable monthly subject to certain conditions and penalties for non-attendance;

(1) No payment for uncertified illness (lose £5 per day).

(2) No payment for certified illness, unless a National Health Certificate was produced (lose £1 per day).

(3) No payment for absences of more than half a day whether or not agreed beforehand (lose £5 per day).

(4) No special cases or circumstances considered.

(5) No payment for holidays (lose £1 per day).

(6) No payment for absences of less than half a day (lose £1 per day).

(7) No payment if lateness (morning or afternoon) exceeds half an hour (lose £1 per day).

Figure 5.4 Manual worker grade structure and payments (21.9.1979)

Grade	Hourly/ Weekly	A	B	C	D
H6	P	242.00	235.00	227.50	219.50
	£	96.80	94.00	91.00	87.80
H5	P	219.50	212.50	204.50	198.00
	£	87.80	85.00	81.80	79.20
H4	P	198.00	191.00	184.00	176.50
	£	79.20	76.40	73.60	70.60
H3	P	176.50	170.00	163.00	155.00
	£	70.60	68.00	65.20	62.00
H2	P	155.00	148.00	141.50	134.50
	£	62.00	59.40	56.40	53.40
H1	P	134.50	130.50	126.50	
	£	53.80	52.50	50.60	

The second part of the Productivity Scheme was a productivity/performance bonus. The basic rates at the time were increased by between 6.3% and 6.5% subject to certain constraints and a performance increase from 71% to 86%.

In September 1979 a new Productivity Scheme was launched. The Attendance Bonus continued but the Performance Bonus was consolidated into the basic rates (as listed in Figure 5.4). In its place a new Productivity Bonus was introduced. In this case efficiency norms were established for each of the main production departments as follows;

Machine Shop (including Specials)	..	..	71%
Welding Shop	..	..	82%
Assembly Shop	..	..	85%

For each one half percentage improvement in efficiency above these rates a 1% bonus was payable. The bonus resulting from the first 2½% improvement in productivity was guaranteed and consolidated into the basic rates (see figure 5.4). Therefore bonus was only payable after efficiency had exceeded 73½%, 84½% and 87½% respectively. In the Stores, Warehouse, Goods Inward, Packing and Despatch a flexibility and mobility deal was concluded and in return the workers were to be paid an average additional bonus when the efficiency levels in the three shops rose above the averaged level of 79½%. In a similar system in the Maintenance Department and Toolroom, efforts towards improved flexibility and productivity were rewarded by the consolidation of an additional 5½% into basic salaries, in addition to which the workers were to receive the average additional bonus when efficiency in three shops rose above 79½%. The inspection department were paid an additional bonus in accordance with a special formula and supervision (chargehands) were to receive their departmental bonus.

Traditionally, the production department had operated on normal day shift basis (8 - 5). However in the mid 1970's a two shift system was introduced, firstly into the Machine Shop, but later into other sections. This was the common 6 am - 2 pm and 2 pm to 10 pm double day shift format and was available to anyone who wished to transfer. All new employees were recruited to the two shift system. There was also an occasional nightshift. Shift premiums were payable at a rate of time and a quarter for the double day shifts and time and a third for the nightshift.

An additional element to the employee's remuneration package was provided by the Annual Bonus. This was paid on a calendar year basis and was equal to 4% of the annual wage based upon the most recent rate applicable. Management retained the right to vary the percentage of the bonus but expected it to remain at the 4% level. The bonus was not guaranteed and was only payable at the discretion of the Directors.

The main production area problems were identified by the Production Director as being related to the labour market. One particular problem concerned the availability in the local labour market of sufficiently skilled workers. Whilst much of the work was fairly standard some work in the Machine and Welding shops required extremely high levels of skill. Yet such skill levels were hard to procure in the Slough labour market. The problem was generally perceived as a general decline in the skill of workers which coincided with a situation where the demands made by customers were for better quality products to higher tolerances. Related to this was the problem of competition for labour upon the Slough Trading Estate. This had led to the 'bidding up' of the wage rates to an artificially high level and the subsequent recruitment problems. Finally the workforce at Bestobell Mobrey on the production side was ethnically 'mixed' and there were undercurrents of racial discontent within the workforce on occasions.

5.2 Research Methodology

In Chapter 3 it was argued that theories of power which utilised the 'positivist' methodology and thus embraced an 'objectivist' approach to social science were inadequate because these perspectives limited their ability to get to grips with the complex nature of power. Power could only be explicated through a synthesis of both the 'subjectivist' and

'objectivist' approaches, and therefore, of the concepts of 'action' and 'structure'. This research study was therefore not conducted using the prevalent survey methodology and associated questionnaire techniques. Instead a version of the 'ethnographic research method' was adopted as this method claims to focus attention upon a more subjectivist approach to social science.

What, then, comprises the ethnographic method? It is not the place here to go into a detailed discussion of the ethnographic method and qualitative research (See Bogdan and Taylor 1975, Lofland, 1971, 1976 for detailed expositions). However, we can consider some of the major facets, especially to the extent that they relate to our research study. Whilst there are varieties of ethnographic research, there is a certain set of assumptions or commitments which they all share. Thus the ethnographic method focuses upon the problem of understanding social actions and acknowledges the distinctive character of social life and the social world. This method is also concerned with 'naturalism' or the investigation of phenomena in their natural settings. This strategy seeks to decrease procedural reactivity or the degree to which individuals withdraw from normal behaviour while under study. This, of course, can only be achieved by an associated increase in personal reactivity or the degree to which the personal characteristics of the researcher impact upon the research data. Finally the ethnographic method emphasises the processual nature of social life and the study of social phenomena in their context ('holism' as it is known).

Having described the basic features of the ethnographic approach, it is now possible to discuss in detail the chronology of my research activity in the field.

The field research within Bestobell Mobrey can be seen as comprising four phases. These will be termed the orientation phases, phase 1, phase 2 and the analysis phase.

The orientation phase consisted largely of the ethnographic process of 'entering the field'. This process entails gaining access to a research site, establishing the parameters of the study and developing a relationship with organisational members. In the organisational sphere, entry is normally facilitated by a 'gatekeeper' who is sympathetic to the researcher's objectives and who wields enough influence and authority to ensure that entry is achieved. As already stated I was originally introduced to the Group Personnel Manager of Bestobell Limited, P.G.D. Naylor by a mutual acquaintance. I met Mr. Naylor in February 1978 at Bestobell Group headquarters and as a result of that meeting he arranged that I should be contacted by Bestobell Mobrey Limited. I was eventually contacted in April 1978 by Keith Mackney, the Personnel Manager and a meeting was arranged. At this meeting I explained in outline terms what I proposed to do in the course of the research project. The project was provisionally agreed but was confirmed in May 1978 after the Works Committee (which will be described in detail later) had been consulted about my presence. After the Managing Director (who was extremely busy and often absent at this time), the Personnel Manager appeared to be one of the most influential people within the management hierarchy and was, because of his academic and professional background, extremely well disposed towards academic research activity.

The objectives of this initial phase of the research study were two-fold.

Firstly, I hoped that, over a period of time, I would become a 'neutral' and 'taken for granted' part of the organisational scene. It was my intention to develop a relationship of trust with members of the organisation so that they would be completely at ease in my presence and familiar with my activities. Thus, in line with the concern for naturalism, I hoped that a situation could be attained where I did not 'affect' or 'taint' the processes or phenomena that I wished to study and record. Secondly, I also wished to use this period to begin to 'sense', receive and record attitudes, behaviours and events which appeared to be important to an understanding of the ways in which power was utilised, exercised and perceived within Bestobell Mobrey. This technique of waiting to be impressed by re-current themes has been variously labelled in the literature as 'sensing', 'engaging in free-floating attention' or 'listening with the third ear'.

However the persuance of this strategy presented several practical problems and difficulties. Firstly I was unable to spend long continuous periods of time in the company because of my teaching and other commitments at the Polytechnic where I work and because of my inability to conclude a 'contract' with the Personnel Manager which would have allowed me totally unrestricted access. My 'contact' concerning research access was rather vague, depsite attempts to detail it, but it basically meant that appointments for interviews had to be made and that visits to the company were for meetings or specified purposes only. As a result of these problems, the process of becoming 'taken for granted' took a rather long time. The second problem that occurred concerned how much to disclose to organisational members about the research project.

This is a standard problem in the ethnographic method and is well documented in the literature. As I have already stated it was my intention simply to observe the processes of power and interaction at Bestobell Mobrey and let concepts, ideas and even hypotheses emerge from the data collected in the manner of a 'grounded research' style. However it soon became clear that this strategy was going to present practical difficulties. Organisation members wished to know about my 'theory' when in fact no theory existed apart from some, at that time, undeveloped ideas and suppositions. Management, especially the Personnel Manager, increasingly required some description of the 'research design' and in discussions it became clear that they were confused and ill-at-ease with my research style. I therefore decided that, in order to maintain organisational access, I would adopt, from a limited period, a more understandable research style. Thus I decided to take the model of power described by Marchington (see Chapter 2) and operationalise it at Bestobell Mobrey. This strategy succeeded in resolving both my problems. The theory required the collection of certain data and this was facilitated by a structural programme of formal and informal interviews and some observation of work processes. Secondly the various members of the organisation (management and workers) were perfectly happy with this explanation of my purpose and never again seemed inquisitive about the nature of my research. From that point onwards my requests for access to meetings or individuals were no longer subject to query.

The methods used during this phase of the fieldwork were numerous. Initially I arranged a series of formal interviews with various members of management in an attempt to familiarise myself with the structure and organisation of Bestobell Mobrey.

Thus I interviewed the Managing Director, Personnel Manager, Training Officer, Financial Controller, Marketing Manager, Sales Manager, Systems Manager, Chief Engineer, General Works Manager and Production Manager. These interviews lasted from between one and a half to three hours and detailed notes were made as a result. I also had formal interviews with the negotiating members on the Works Committee. In addition to these interviews I also collected documentary evidence and material concerning the company, its structure, its operation and its products. As a result of my attempt to operationalise the Marchington model of power I also had a series of informal interviews and discussions with managers and workers. For example, I had a series of four meetings with the Production Manager, Geoff Reid, in which we explored the structure and operation of the Production Department. These meetings usually lasted around two hours. In addition some time was spent in observation and discussion on the shop floor in each of the major sections or shops. Finally, during this phase of the research, an attempt was made to record any interesting or unusual ideas or items which I heard during conversation or noted from records or documents and which I thought might be useful or important at a later stage. This activity was part of the process of 'sensing'.

This orientation phase lasted from April 1978 until October 1978. It was during this period that I gradually realised that the existing theories of power were inadequate and could not explain the processes of power that I was beginning to observe in Bestobell Mobrey. Thus the theories which I was beginning to realise were theoretically deficient or partial, were also weak in that they did not fully explain the operation of power in the workplace.

This was brought into stark relief by my attempt to operationalise the Marchington model. Despite other advantages, this model did little to advance my knowledge of power processes within the company. (For details of how the model was operationalised and the results see Appendix A). It was also during this period that I decided that, given the limitations upon research time and the constraints of a single researcher working part-time, the research would have to focus upon a single forum where the operation of power was most clearly manifested and visible. It became clear that the Works Committee system was the ideal focus for the observation of power within Bestobell Mobrey because this was the forum where all the major organisational decisions were discussed and debated. In so far as both sides articulated their positions on the issues then this forum provided useful insights into both the ideologies of the parties and aspects of their power.

After the orientation phase the bulk of the fieldwork was done in two phases. Phase one ran from January 1979 until April 1979. Fieldwork was then interrupted by two separate events. Firstly, there occurred a take-over bid for the Bestobell Group (including Bestobell Mobrey) by the British Tyre and Rubber (B.T.R) Group. As a result of this bid and the ensuing activity I was informed by the Personnel Manager that it would be best if I discontinued my involvement with the company for a short time. This was unfortunate but there was no way in which I could prevent this temporary exclusion. After the resolution of the bid in which B.T.R failed to gain control of the Bestobell Group, I was prevented from resuming field research by a protracted illness and associated recuperation period. Fieldwork finally resumed in January 1980 and was completed in December of that year.

This comprised Phase two of the research project.

Both phase one and phase two of the fieldwork were concerned with the observation and analysis of power within the forum of the Works Committee system. This system (together with the Staff Committee) had been founded in 1977 partly as a result of a one day dispute and the threat by a minority of workers to gain a trade union. The Works Committee consisted of both management and worker representations. The Management were represented by the General Works Manager ('Dick' Rumens) as Chairman, the Personnel Manager (Keith Mackney), the Production Manager (Geoff Reid) and the Training Officer (Peter Botell) as Secretary. The elected worker representatives were divided into negotiating and consultative members. The Negotiating members, of which there were three, represented respectively, the skilled, the semi-skilled and the chargehands in the plant. In addition to their participation in the normal monthly Works Committee meetings, they also negotiated with management separately on such issues as the annual wage award. The Consultative members were elected to represent specific areas or 'shops' within the plant. In addition they also effectively acted as health and safety representatives. The Works Committee met monthly to discuss a pre-circulated agenda that was compiled by both sides of the committee. The worker representatives held, one week before the Works Committee meeting, an Agenda Meeting where issues and problems were raised and formulated for the Works Committee agenda. The precise roles of the Negotiating and Consultative members and the scope of negotiations and discussions were contained in the written constitution of the Committee. This stated that the Works Committee existed to 'provide a recognised and direct channel of communication between employees represented by the

Committee and management on matters affecting their joint interests'. The Committee also attempted 'to secure the degree of co-operation for the prosecution of measures undertaken in the mutual interest of the employees and the Company by both representative negotiation and consultative practices'. (For further details of the Works Committee see Appendix B (Sections 2 and 3) and Appendix C).

As a result of the focus on the Works Committee system certain methods were used during these two phases. Firstly the agenda meetings, management briefings and the Works Committee meetings themselves were observed and notes taken. After a few months a portable tape recorder was used to tape both the worker agenda meetings and the Works Committee meetings. This was used openly after consultations with the management and workers, but was used in an unobtrusive manner so as not to interfere excessively with the 'naturalness' of the data. To my surprise the recorder aroused little interest or suspicion among the members of the committee and its use was virtually ignored by them. The recorder was also used for all further formal interviews. In addition to the observation and recording of the workings of the Works Committee system, several other methods of data collection were used. Further formal interviews were held with members of management and negotiating Works Committee members. Informal discussions and conversations were held after agenda meetings, management briefings and Works Committee meetings. Finally, further documentary material was collected including policies, procedures and Works Committee minutes.

It was during these phases of the research study that concepts and insights into the operation of power within Bestobell Mobrey began to

emerge. These ideas were noted and catalogued. Attempts were made to 'feed back' these notions to the participants in order to see whether they perceived them in the same way or disagreed with my assessments. It may therefore be argued that the research study conforms to some of the basic tenets of the ethnographic style. Thus methods were combined in an attempt to 'triangulate' data and results were 'fed-back' to the subjects in an attempt to ensure the validity of the data collected. Several problems emerged from this process, all concerned with the notion of 'false' consciousness. Thus to what extent can participants agree upon or acknowledge processes of which, by their very nature, they might be unconscious? One would not expect, for example, individuals who were subject to hegemonic control to be fully or even partially aware of the process of their subjugation. On the other side of the coin, management often agreed with my interpretation of their actions (or non-actions) in specific situations but generally were unwilling or unable to discuss their more general strategy in such terms. Finally there was the ethical and moral dilemma of disclosure. Was it fair or reasonable to expose individuals to the other possible interpretations of their position, when such revelations could increase conflict between the parties or increase dissatisfaction?

The final phase of the research programme was the analysis phase. Here the data collected was assembled, collated and reviewed several times in an attempt to reveal underlying themes. It was at this stage that the model of power was constructed from insights gained from theoretical study and insights derived from the data. The data bank at this stage in the research process included approximately 30 hours of taped meetings, interviews and discussions; notes of interviews

and conversations; the full minutes of the Works Committee; and various documentary evidence.

Chapter 6

The processes of power in Bestobell Mobrey

Works Committee Personnel

Management

Dick Rumens - General Works Manager (Chairman)

Keith Mackney - Personnel Manager

Peter Botell - Training Manager (Secretary)

Geoff Reid - Production Manager

Worker Representatives

a) Negotiating Members (at different times during the study)

1.	2.	3.	4.
Tony Allen	Tony Allen	Jan Arends	Peter Dormer
Bill Leach	Bill Leach	John Moule	John Moule
Bill Wright	Ron Rowland	Ron Rowland	Ron Rowland

b) Consultative Members

Jan Arends

Ivor Phillips

A. Raga

Peter Stevenson

Meg Surgeon

M. Nawas

Roy Dixon

Julie Smith

Ralph Hoskins

Joe Kapadia

Bob Gibson

Ray (Penn Works)

6.1 The processes of power in Bestobell Mobrey

What, then, emerged from the research study? What was discovered about the processes of power in Bestobell Mobrey in general and within the Works Committee in particular? The reader will remember that the theoretical model advanced in this thesis was created as a result of a complex interaction and synthesis between data and themes uncovered in the field research and the theoretical concepts and notions derived from the literature. Therefore, although, for the purposes of exposition and clarity, the field research data has been left to this stage in the thesis, this in no way implies that the data emerged after the theory in a post hoc manner. The process of production of the power model must be borne in mind. We are now in a position to analyse and review the themes, and ideas that emerged from the research data at some length. The final chapter will then attempt to relate and integrate these themes back into the model of power already discussed.

6.2 The ideological hegemony of Bestobell management

During the field research it became clear to the researcher that the management of Bestobell Mobrey Limited had succeeded in establishing an ideological ascendency over the workforce. Given the general asymmetry of resources, the absence of a collective focal point in the form of a trade union and the comparatively high level of wages paid, then this is perhaps not surprising. Yet in other ways it was perhaps rather unexpected. The workforce at Bestobell Mobrey possessed, in Hill's (1974) terms, a certain degree of structural power because of the nature of the product and labour markets. As we have already seen the products made by Bestobell Mobrey have to be of a high quality due to their use in

potentially dangerous situations in the gas, oil, chemical and nuclear industries. This quality level is frequently tested in plant by outside (Government and Lloyds) inspectors. This focus upon quality should have given the workforce, many of whom were skilled craftsmen, a degree of power over management subject to the development of a group consciousness and cohesiveness. Secondly, in terms of the labour market, Slough was (and is) an area of comparatively low unemployment and therefore workers found it relatively easy to find buyers for their skills. As a result management often found it difficult to recruit as many skilled workers as they would have liked. Certain groups of workers also occupied central positions in the workflow from which they could have exerted a certain degree of power. (For details of the structural power position of various workgroups in the plant see Appendix A).

Despite the availability of these sources of power, the workers at Bestobell Mobrey generally did not use their potential power. It may be argued that in Marchington's (1975) terms, the workforce had not achieved any 'power realisation'. It will be argued here that this was not due to any natural barriers to the development of group consciousness, but was largely attributable to a strategy of ideological domination and structuring by management.

Ideological hegemony is obviously based upon a managerial ideology or frame of reference. What was this ideology and in what ways did it operate within Bestobell Mobrey? As we shall see, and in common with most other industrial organisations, the managerial ideology was founded upon notions of 'managerial prerogative' and the 'right to manage'.

Thus as we shall see the ideology of Bestobell Mobrey management is firmly located within the unitarist frame of reference despite pluralist pretentions. This ideology of 'managerial prerogative' was sometimes so ingrained that it was completely 'taken-for-granted' by the workforce and went totally unchallenged. Thus one of the annual tasks of the Works Committee system was the negotiation, in a series of special meetings, of the annual wage award. The negotiations were conducted by two or three members of management and the three negotiating members of the committee. The procedure for negotiations was fairly informal and was not committed to writing. Initially these negotiations took place in December but during the course of the research study this date was moved, unilaterally, by management to July. For the Works Committee meeting of April 1980 the worker representatives tabled the question of the July annual review on the agenda. In response the Personnel Manager said,

"We promised you that there would be an annual review in July. We are currently in the Personnel Department doing a survey of local wage rates, just for backup information for ourselves and this should be completed by the end of April. We should have formulated our line on the pay review, I think, by about mid May. We do have problems as far as our negotiators are concerned, on our side; not your side but on our side because one of our negotiators is going to be 'swanning' off to the States for a few weeks .... But we would hope to be talking to you toward the latter part of May and certainly before the beginning of June".

In the next meeting on the 13th May the worker representatives felt it necessary to raise the matter again. They pointed out that mid May had arrived and yet negotiations had not started.

The Personnel Manager and the General Works Manager both stated that the management side was not yet ready to negotiate and when they were then negotiations could commence. One of the worker representatives pointed out that a late start in negotiations would lead to running over the established deadline but management simply responded by stating that they were not yet ready. A while later I asked Ron Rowland, one of the negotiating members why they had not pushed management harder on this point. He replied by arguing,

"It's up to them (Management) in the long run isn't it? We can try and get them going but they set the date".

Thus in discussions with various members of the committee it became clear that, at least on certain issues, it was accepted that management had an absolute right to manage.

However, in other areas workers were willing to challenge the managerial prerogative. One interesting example concerned the National Engineering Agreement of 1979 to which Bestobell Mobrey as a non-unionised and non-federated firm were not a party. The background to the issue was that the Management at Bestobell Mobrey have for many years pledged to keep terms and conditions of employment in advance of those specified in the National Engineering Agreement. Thus for many years the workers have enjoyed a situation where there has been a positive differential between their terms and conditions and those proposed in the National Agreement. This was perceived by the workers as one of the 'benefits' of employment at Bestobell. In the National Agreement signed in late 1979 an extra two days holiday were instigated. In terms of holiday entitlement workers at Bestobell Mobrey had always enjoyed an extra day over and above the national agreement.

Thus workers expected that management would grant two extra days as a result of the agreement, thus preserving the one day differential. However in December 1979 Management announced, via written channels, that they would only be awarding an extra day. Unknown to the workers and their representatives, Management at Mobrey were making this decision against their will at the direction of Bestobell Group who were attempting to standardise terms and conditions within the Group. As the Personnel Manager put it later,

"It might have been apparent at the time that my heart wasn't in it anyway, because it wasn't ..( ) .. That was a decision that was actually made by Group, not by us in this company. I think the executive of this particular company was split almost fifty/fifty on what we should do... Being the soft personnel person my attitude was that we were getting away with murder, frankly, in leaving it as it was, and my heart certainly wasn't in it. Although, you know, when you are representing a 'line' you have to represent it".

Management, therefore, found it very difficult to construct any reasonable legitimising arguments to defend their position and were forced back upon the simple assertion of managerial prerogative.

The issue was the first agenda item for the Works Committee meeting on the 9th January 1980. Management began by outlining the situation and by putting forward the argument that they were still in line with the engineering agreement. Thus the Personnel Manager, Keith Mackney, stated,

"...We've said that we will bring ourselves into line with the engineering , er .... general conditions applying within the engineering industry".

However, this argument was soon refuted by the worker representatives who draw attention to the erosion of their traditional extra days holiday. As Ron Rowland put it,

"So really, that privilege, fringe benefit, that we've all enjoyed for years has been eroded".

During the argument and discussion that followed, management increasingly fell back upon the simple assertion of managerial prerogative and eschewed any attempt to legitimise their decision on any other basis. Witness the following statement by the General Works Manager, 'Dick' Rumens,

"I think you've got to bear in mind ... (arguing in background) ... wait a minute! lets not get carried away about this, you've got to bear in mind that there is no obligation on our part, on the company's part, to do a single solitary thing".

Indeed a few moments later he stated,

"We are giving an extra day's holiday; there is no earthly reason why we should have given an extra day's holiday, let alone arguing about whether it should be one or two days".

He was backed up in this line by Keith Mackney.

"The company, as Mr. Rumens has said, is under no obligation at all to do anything about holidays".

The issue was finally closed by Dick Rumens, who summed up the discussion by suggesting,

"You can continue this argument for a long, long time. The situation at the moment is that it's four weeks and two days holiday

and the company is not going to change that. Is that correct, Keith? I mean, you know, we can talk about it and we can all express an opinion. You've expressed your opinion very strongly about it ... and we will minute that as such please Peter. (Peter Botell, Training Officer and Committee Secretary). But beyond that the company isn't going to change on this one".

It is fair to say that the management of Bestobell Mobrey, during the course of the research study, did not often resort to the simple assertion of managerial prerogative. In fact their general style, at least in public, was shaped by weak and vague notions of pluralist ideology. However, this did not prevent some more unitarist notions such as the 'sovereignty of management' from sometimes emerging. As Keith Mackney once remarked,

"I mean, after all, management are there to manage and make the decisions. That's their job, it's not open to anyone else".

Thus in this situation the 'right to manage' over a specific issue was not taken-for-granted by the workforce but was instead challenged. Thus management had vigorously to defend and assert their prerogative in order to legitimise it.

Another theme to emerge from the observations of the Works Committee system was the way in which the assertion of prerogative sometimes developed into the creation of a 'principle' which could be used to reinforce managerial ideology and thus domination. Two separate examples can be cited of this process in operation. One concerns Keith Mackney's often repeated statement that there could be 'no negotiation under duress'. He argued that management would not continue negotiations whilst the workers were taking any sanctions, whether it be an overtime

ban or strike action. Keith often put this argument over in Works Committee meetings and in informal discussions. For example in the Works Committee meeting in January 1980, Keith was outlining the events of the previous wage negotiations which were interrupted by a one day strike. Thus he described the situation,

"Where the workers were actually taking sanctions against the management. And as you are all aware, one thing that the company will not do, and no company will do this, is to negotiate in formal negotiations, on any topic where there are sanctions being taken against them".

This line of argument was never to my knowledge questioned or challenged by the worker representatives. Most of the worker representatives with whom I had discussions accepted this as a statement of the 'norm'. Yet this is more than an assertion of managerial prerogative in as much as it forms the basis of a principle which legitimises the right of management to define the rules. As Keith admitted when I put the point to him;

"Certainly, I'm trying to build it into this lot as a point of principle".

A second example concerned the format of the Works Committee. The worker representatives on a number of different occasions and for a number of different reasons requested that the negotiating panel on the workers side should consist of more members in order to ensure a more equitable representation of the various interest groups within the plant. Each time that this question was raised management responded in the same way. Instead of arguing about the 'equity' of representation they raised the problem of size. Keith Mackney attempted to establish the principle that three was the

maximum number of negotiators that any management would wish to deal with. This tactic usually resulted in a discussion or argument between the worker representatives about which groups or departments should provide the negotiating members.

However at the Works Committee meeting on 9th January 1980 the issue was raised again, but this time with more force, by the worker representatives. In the face of this increased opposition management were forced to retreat from the simple assertion of managerial prerogative to the use of several legitimising arguments. Thus Dick Rumens argued,

"...there is no way that we can have a negotiating committee, or a body of people the size of this committee, to negotiate. Otherwise we're going to have the situation where every department negotiates for itself, and our workforce isn't the size to do that".

Keith posed the problem as follows;

"... why don't we have more on the committee? It's interesting that, in fact, normally a negotiating party is not more than two. It's quite often two. Two is certainly the number which I'm familiar with. But three is the optimum number and if you start getting beyond that you don't have negotiations. You know, during what can be quite heated times, and I don't know whether your reps feed back to you just the sort of bloody times that we do have on occasions, when the chips are down, but, you know, what can be a heated time really becomes quite unmanageable when you've got large numbers at negotiations. Like, I would not negotiate with the numbers of people around this table, because you frankly couldn't control that sort of meeting when you're talking about negotiations. Now what should be happening is what seems

to be happening in some areas. You should be feeding representatives with what they should be saying to us. We then give our replies and feed it back to you, and with that chain working, you can get the information out to the works at large, to the people you represent. I'm pleased to see that it's working in Ivor's area. If its not working in other areas I'm sorry to have to say this, but to a certain extent its your own fault. Your negotiating members, of course, come up to see us and, of course, they represent the views of the works. But if you feel that you are not represented, you should hammer your negotiating members for that information".

Later, as the discussion drew to a close, Keith argued that, given the relative 'newness' of the system, it was performing very well.

"I've been with Bestobell Mobrey for about a year and a half. I came from a highly unionised organisation at which the system worked no better than the system in this company. So it's a credit to you as consultative members and its certainly a credit to your negotiating members that the thing is working as well as it is".

These legitimising arguments were, in the end, sufficient, given the lack of co-ordinated and concerted pressure from the worker representatives, to ensure that the managerial decision to have only three negotiating members was preserved. Thus the principle that 'three is the maximum number for negotiations' was legitimised by a series of arguments stressing problems of size and emotion and pointing out the efficiency of the present system. Of course in these situations both sides are actively involved in advancing legitimising arguments. They are both attempting to strategically define the situation and impose their definition on the other party. Management were generally successful on these issues for several reasons.

Firstly because they had a broader repertoire of argument than the worker representatives. This would appear to reflect the ideological hegemony of management. Secondly they tended to articulate and present their arguments with much more force than the worker representatives were able to muster. Finally workers on occasion, appeared reluctant to challenge a specific managerial argument even when they had a good counter - argument, because to do so would have in some way entailed a more general rejection of managerial prerogative.

6.2.1 The use of legitimising arguments

So far we have examined the ways in which the management at Bestobell Mobrey asserted their managerial prerogative and how, in certain cases, this was purposively reinforced by the creation of principles which legitimised their position. We can now turn our attention to the way in which linguistic resources were used in the form of legitimising arguments, derived from managerial ideology, in order to reproduce the structure of domination.

A regular agenda item at the Works Committee was the Chairman's Monthly Report. Early in the meeting the General Works Manager, Dick Rumens, would report upon the position of the company in general and of the performance of the works in particular. The general drift and tenor of these reports can perhaps be demonstrated by some written examples extracted from the minutes of the Works Committee.

"During April, the efficiency of the manufacturing division was unsatisfactory. Indications were that the standard period to complete jobs was being exceeded by up to 30%. This apparent inefficiency had a direct effect on profitability and also meant that time was being lost which could be used for other jobs. The Production Manager would

examine means of improving efficiency and controlling non-productive time more effectively".

(Minute 94, 8th May 1978)

"Unfortunately, overdues rose to an unacceptable level after successfully reducing them in previous months. This situation should be rectified during September as delivering late damages the Company's reputation which we can ill-afford .... It is also necessary to contain costs and ensure that they do not exceed budgeted levels. The revised Productivity Scheme was an essential feature in containing unit costs and future sales depended upon remaining competitive".

(Minute 131, 12th September 1978)

".... This was a very poor performance especially as the previous two months were unsatisfactory. Orders available were now sufficient to enable the Company to meet the revised profit forecast for the year. This achievement would only be possible by all employees making extra effort and being more flexible ... Our future depends upon hitting our targets and providing a much improved and reliable delivery service to our customers and that would mean delivering on time. This must be the responsibility of us all and continued efforts are required throughout the remainder of the year and 1979, when economic conditions will continue to be difficult. All employees must be made aware of the Company's position".

(Ninute 140, 17th October 1978)

The content, and indeed the implications, of these reports were never challenged by the worker representatives who tended to receive them in respectful silence. This could perhaps be characterised

as a situation of unconscious compliance by the workers to managerially imposed definitions of organisational reality. On several occasions I asked various members of the Committee why this was so and obtained a number of different answers. Some were simply confused by the figures and arguments and felt that management were in the best position to analyse the situation. "They're the experts aren't they? I mean I don't know the facts, do I? It's up to them to get the facts and let us know the situation". Others felt that the general level of the reports was a little abstract and did not directly relate to their department or section and were as a result indifferent. Finally, several of them implied that even if they did have a point they would be rather afraid of challenging the General Works Manager.

This pattern of unquestioned compliance was broken only once in the course of the research study. This occurred in the case that I, and later others, came to know as 'Dick's Rocket'. During the General Works Manager's report of January 1980, Dick Rumens outlined, as usual, the general position of the company and the performance of the works. In view of the poor position he proceeded to deliver a strongly felt lecture on the need for increased effort.

"... now so far this month we've not done very well at all. It seems to be peculiar that everybody makes a big push for the end of the year and, of course it drops off a bit in January. But we've got to pick this one up! And its really to get the message out to everybody throughout the place that, you know, we can't all sort of sit back and become complacent! Especially this year".

After a few technical questions John Moule, at that time a negotiating member, responded to Dick's statement.

John "You were saying a minute or two ago about people becoming complacent or that they shouldn't become complacent because of what you want to get out of the door ..."

Dick "No we shouldn't become complacent because we won't achieve the ...."

John "But I don't see where it affects any of these people here? It's not them that have become complacent ..."

Dick "... no, no, no"

John "We're not getting the work to do ..."

Dick "Exactly I mean ..."

John "Well why all the, why are they, why are we being told we shouldn't become complacent? ..."

Dick "I'm not - you're making it ... you're under a misapprehension. ... At these meetings I state the position of the Company, I don't just look around the table and say everybody here, I say the Company. It's a message for the company because these minutes don't only go to the works. I don't just look at the works and say don't become complacent. We look throughout the Company; at say, Engineering and Sales and Production Control and Purchasing. It's not just, no, don't take it personally". (confused, many people talking)

Dick "... there is no doubt that in the beginning of January the place becomes complacent, (raises voice) its gone to sleep! (Pause)

Jan "Hibernating" (Ironically)

(Several people talking, all expressing dissent)

John "There is nothing of any note coming through the, er ..."

Dick "I know, I'm not ..."

John "... packaging department"

Dick "I hear what you say, and as I say ..."

John "You can only pack what's given to you but at the moment theres nothing substantial coming through"
(Dick protests in the background)

Dick "I'm not directing it at people around the table. I'm talking about the situation which faces this Company ..."

John "Well I'm just trying to answer about everybody being asleep. It's shortage of component parts as far as I know ..."

Dick "Exactly. So they're asleep"

John "No. It's rather people that deliver to us"

Dick "So they're asleep"

John "We can't help that"

Continues for a while in the same fashion

John "If you put £50,000 worth of work through the packaging department, you'll get it packed. But if you put £10,000 in front of them that's all you'll get packed ... (Dick interrupts) ... so therefore I don't think you should really say ..."

Dick "I will always say (rather heated) at this meeting, I'm not saying its your fault. I'll always at this meeting express what is going on in the Company. I want to get away from this attitude ... (unclear) .. talking about the works and the staff".

Goes into detailed figures and repeats his arguments. States that the Company is in a poor position.

John "Well, it's not the workers fault"

Dick "I'm not, I'm not talking about workers. We are all workers"

John "Well what I mean is that you've got to get stuff through the finished part of stores into assembly ..."

Dick "Yes"

John "... if you've got no sheets in the finished part of stores because of shortages; what can we do about it?"

Dick "I'm not saying you can do anything"

John "Well I'm just trying to point out that its not really the workers fault"

The issue continues and Dick outlines the need for more production and despatches.

John "The onus is on you to get that work in this company"

Dick "Right, which is why ... (John interrupts) .. Which is why John I'm talking about the Company and not the machine shop, because the machine shop's got more than enough work to cope with. The, the welding shop has got some work, the assembly department's got very little because we haven't got a lot of stuff from outside and we haven't got it all off the machine shop, therefore the stores are going to run flat, therefore the despatch is, but the Company I'm talking about ... I'm not interested in just looking at the works, because I don't care if the works are up to their eyeballs and very busy because if we're not selling the stuff we are none of us doing very well ..."

John "It's up to management to sort this out"

Dick "Wait a minute, wait a minute, we're all part of this Company"

John "I know that, Mr. Rumens, but ..."

Dick "So let's not all ..."

John "We're doing our bit, what's available but no more, so therefore you've got to make some available. Management not workers. We only work here, we do the work as good as ..."

Dick "I only work here (said with force)".

John "And therefore I say it's managements ... The onus is on management to get that problem sorted out and get the work inside the door ..."

Dick "It is the responsibility of management to ensure that what the company is trying to do is achievable and it is being done.

Dick "Sometimes it will depend on .... (unclear) .... and sometimes stock control and sometimes sales and sometimes other people. What I would hope we are trying to do, but I don't want to continue this argument, is we're all working to the same end, which is by hook or by crook to achieve the numbers we set ourselves".

Discussion then drifts off to some of the technical problems which have been experienced.

Several interesting points emerge from this discussion. Firstly we can see the managerial ideology reflected in the use of legitimising arguments and rhetoric. Underlying Dick's argument is a unitary frame of reference which is contained in the very nature of the language he uses. Thus he seeks to suggest that everyone is on the same side and is in pursuit of common objectives. Therefore he is not 'picking on' anybody but simply telling everyone what they need to do in order to achieve the common objective. John, on the other hand, seeks to resist this by a series of arguments which seek to suggest that there are many 'sides' within the firm and that as far as this forum is concerned, Dick is pointing his finger in the wrong direction. Thus John seeks to refute the unitarist definition by drawing upon an ideology which stresses divergence of goals and divisions between groups. However, John was unable or unwilling to sustain his challenge to managerially imposed definitions of reality partly because he was not actively supported by other members of the Works Committee. The way in which this issue was brought to a close also illustrates the tactical superiority of management in such situations. John identified a specific problem area and was invited by Dick to describe it in detail.

The discussion then proceeded to detailed matters and the focus moved away from the 'right' of management to blame workers for poor performance in the works.

This, of course, was not an issue where one side or the other was going to 'win'. Indeed, it may be argued that Dick was merely attempting to structure expectations and inculcate certain values. At a later date I questioned Dick on this point and put my interpretation to him. He agreed that this had been one of those rare cases where his right to define organisational reality had been challenged but insisted that they had got the message.

PSK "So it's largely a case of message?"

Dick "That's right. They got the message. That the Company had a bloody awful January. And that was the message I was getting over ... I don't care if they like the message or not, that 'is' the message. They can agree with it or disagree with it. They'll get the message and they'll recognise that all is not as well as it should be".

The issue of 'Dick's Rocket' also touches upon the important distinction between the content of a legitimising principle or argument and its form. Thus in an attempt to achieve their objectives management can explicitly use legitimising arguments or more subtly can encode these arguments in the very language and rhetoric of discussion. In general, the management at Bestobell Mobrey tended to avoid certain types of legitimising argument and certain forms of expression. Thus they did not appear to use the fairly standard argument that workers could leave and go elsewhere if they were unhappy. Similarly, they tended to make very little direct reference to arguments centred around their

distinctive managerial competence or their delegated authority as the representatives of shareholders. However the absence of the use of certain arguments in a direct manner did not mean that they were totally missing. Rather than use the form of direct explicit announcement, the management at Bestobell Mobrey appeared to favour a more subtle approach. Thus the legitimising arguments were enmeshed and encoded into the language of discussion. Management on many occasions appeared to be attempting to structure definitions of organisational reality as Dick Rumens was in the case cited. Indeed managerial success in this strategy can be guaged by the extent to which their arguments penetrated and permeated the organisational culture and the consciousness of the workforce. For example one of the negotiating members during an agenda meeting once argued that management decisions had to be respected because,

"they know what they are doing. They can see the whole picture".

Of course, the General Works Manager's report was not the only part of the Works Committee agenda where management attempted to define 'reality'. The management appeared very keen, on numerous occasions to acquaint the workforce with what they saw as the 'economic facts of life'. One example of this process concerned the failure to issue diaries to employees with over ten years service. This issue was raised by Ron Rowland who pointed out that there had been no consultation or even advance notice. Keith Mackney responded by stating that no diaries (for staff or customers) had been produced as a result of cuts in the Marketing department budget. As discussion drew to a close, Joe Kapadia, a consultative member, joked that the Company really should be able to afford the diaries in view of their 37% profits. This provoked laughter and agreement from other worker representatives.

At this stage Dick Rumens, visibly rather exasperated, interjected.

"I don't know where we get this idea from that this Company makes 37% profit".

Joe said that he saw the figure in a newspaper but during discussion it becomes clear that the report referred to a 37% improvement. Just then in an aside one of the representatives, who appeared rather confused, mentioned again a 37% profit level. Dick again interjected with some force;

"... no, no, 37% improvement, and just to allay all those sort of ... (drowned out) ... The Company makes about £10 million sales. Out of that we will have made, before tax and interest, about a million. By the time the tax man and the interest has been paid we'll be lucky to wind up with half a million. So lets not get carried away that we made 37% profit. We make 5, and you would do better to take your money out and shove it in the building society. You'd get a better return. So let's not run away with the idea that this Company's making millions ... (interruptions) ... and that's why, again, I go back to the point that you cannot pass on cost increases willy nilly ..."

Joe (amazed) "How can we run the company when we're getting 5% profit on such a big investment and when we could put it in the building society and get ..."

Dick "You're answering your own question Joe, actually. This is why companies go bust! Because people put their money elsewhere".

When I questioned Dick he agreed that this was a fair example of his general strategy of attempting to structure expectations and attitudes in line with management thinking. This was part of the 'message' that

he wisheed to 'get across'. Sometimes 'profitability' was raised directly and explicitly by management both as an argument to legitimise their ideological position and as a rhetoric to rationalise actions. For example Dick saw the Works Committee as fulfilling an 'educative' role. Part of that educative role was to press home to worker representatives the need for increased profitability. As Dick suggested,

"Well certainly, if you take the last wage negotiations and indeed at other times in discussions with negotiating members, the profitability point is pushed all the time. And with the negotiating members, if you talk to them, that is usually the argument we put forward. We cannot afford it, the profitability will be affected, de dah, de dah, de dah".

A good example involves the use of an external threat to reinforce the managerial ideology and notions of 'profitability' and 'efficiency'. This occurred when a takeover bid was made for the whole Bestobell Group by the British Tyre and Rubber Group (B.T.R.). Unfortunately the researcher was excluded from Bestobell at this time but the effects of the B.T.R bid can be seen in the Works Committee minutes and were verified by later interviews.

The takeover bid was announced to a Works Committee meeting in early June 1979 by the Company Secretary (Minute 201) and the Board recommendation of rejection was noted. Subsequent meetings also received progress reports on the takeover attempt. By the August meeting one finds management appearing to use the bid as a 'threat' in order to reinforce the 'economic facts of life'. Thus in a discussion of the B.T.R bid Dick Rumens stated that,

"there was a need for a change in attitude and approach for the future development of the company and the Group who would be putting considerable pressure on individual companies to obtain greater profits".
(Minute 218)

In a discussion of the Wage review, Dick,

"emphasised to representatives that the Company was not able to meet excessive wage demands which would reduce the Company's competitiveness and its ability to maintain the necessary profit margins for future growth".
(Minute 219)

Finally, during the course of the Chairman's Monthly Report, Dick stated that;

"Regardless of whether or not B.T.R are successful in their take-over bid, our first priority will be to achieve our sales/profits forecasts. Failure to perform will mean that B.T.R (if they are unsuccessful now) could make another attempt at a take-over after the year end results. As well as achieving our despatch targets, we must improve our overall effectiveness.
(Minute 220)

Later in the year, after the failure of the bid, B.T.R were still being used as a justification for managerial drives for efficiency and profitability. Thus in discussions over the curtailment of overtime Dick Rumens stated that;

"Costs were being closely examined with the intention of maintaining the present level as part of Bestobell's continuing fight against B.T.R"
(Minute 224)

Again in his monthly report Dick argued that;

"Following the successful defence against the B.T.R take-over, it was essential to deliver our despatches on time; failure to do so would mean that B.T.R would be back"
(Minute 225)

If one examines the past Works Committee Minutes one can find similar exhortations but without the 'threat' element provided by B.T.R. Indeed as Dick commented later,

"Well yes, the B.T.R bid was serious and worrying. But on the other hand we used their presence to help achieve our objectives".

As a result of this strategy B.T.R was in the minds of the worker representatives nearly one year after the 'bid'. Thus in April 1980 during a discussion about the corporate plan, Ray, a consultative member, put the following question to Dick Rumens.

"The thought occurs, actually, that B.T.R's chairman has just said that they are in the market for new acquisitions; is there any danger of them trying again?"

So far, we have examined examples of managerial ideology being incorporated into a strategy for joint action. Thus we have seen the assertion of managerial prerogative and the ways in which this is supported by legitimising arguments and principles and expressed in terms of a rhetoric. I have characterised the managerial ideology as unitarist in perspective. This perception was checked in a series of in-depth interviews with senior managers. Although there were differences, they generally agreed upon a weak unitarist perspective overlaid with pluralist aspirations.

Thus they tended to see themselves as neutral 'stakeholders' holding the ring between the various interest groups yet at the same time conceived of the organisation as a 'team' which had a 'common objective' and where everyone was pulling in the same direction. Thus presented with the two approaches they tended to select the pluralist. Yet when presented with a series of detailed questions they moved to adopt unitarist stances. Perhaps the culture or ethos of the management at Bestobell Mobrey is best summed up by this description and explanation from Dick Rumens.

"If you take a company like Bestobell Mobrey, I mean obviously it has certain objectives and those objectives are common whether it is for the workers or management. It's a question of understanding and realising that the objectives that management might be seeking to solve are in the best interests of everybody ... Now, management's view; if you take management's view, the objective is to make a profit. If you don't make a profit then nobody is going to benefit. Now the workers may not accept that view, and they may not like that view, but it happens to be true ... Now, the way we earn our salary is by ensuring that the company is successful and makes a profit. That's my objective, that would be Graham Woodhead's objective; that the company is going to grow. Now, having said that's the objective of the company, the way you're going to achieve that objective is by saying 'well we ought to do x, y and z'. You can argue that, alright then, the workers can have some influence on that. I accept that the workers can have some influence on that. They should have some influence on that, provided they accept the overall objective, which is to make money".

6.3 Processes of worker resistance

So far we have argued that the management at Bestobell Mobrey enjoyed a situation of ideological domination over the workforce. This was characterised by a general acceptance of managerial authority and by the prevalence of unilateral managerial rule-making. This ideological hegemony has been demonstrated by reference to the few occasions when it has been challenged. Such challenges have generally been weak and ineffective. The ways in which the management deployed certain legitimising arguments and principles in the form of a rhetoric have also been described. We can now turn our attention to an examination of the nature of the processes by which workers sought to challenge managerial authority.

Challenges to managerial prerogative and authority are usually focused around an 'issue' and the process usually involves the deployment, by the worker representatives, of some legitimising arguments. If they are sucessfully to challenge managerial hegemony they need to combine linguistic resources with physical resources in order to exercise transformative capacity. Yet it may be suggested that it is the linguistic resource which enables the deployment of physical resources in specific situations. Given the reluctance or inability of the workforce at Bestobell Mobrey to utilise their physical resource power base it is therefore the linguistic resources which become crucial. One further important point concerns the nature of the 'issues' that arise between the parties. Given the dominance of management in this company, then 'major' issues are relatively unlikely. The worker representatives are unable directly to challenge managerial authority and therefore most issues appear as 'minor' or unimportant. Yet it may be suggested that this is precisely the mistake of much previous

research which has tended to assume that power can only be studied in situations of a balance of power resources and through the resolution of major contentious issues. However power can equally, and more subtly, be observed in situations where there exists an asymmetry of resources and a relative absence of major issues. Also the fact that only minor issues emerged from the Works Committee forum can perhaps be explained in two ways. Firstly because of the inability of the worker representatives to mount resistance to the managerial prerogative either in ideological or purely physical terms. Secondly, the absence of major issues may simply reflect the dominance of management and their ability to prevent certain issues from arising or being recognised.

Worker resistance to managerial domination can take two distinct forms. Firstly workers can attempt to resist or change a specific managerial decision or rule. Thus we have already seen how management had to defend their decision to reduce the customary holiday differential enjoyed by the workforce at Bestobell Mobrey. Secondly worker resistance can sometimes be simply directed at refuting expressions of managerial authority. Thus we have seen how John Moule attempted, unsuccessfully, to refute the definition of organisational reality that was being proposed by Dick Rumens. As we have suggested, worker resistance involves the utilisation of linguistic resources in the form of arguments and principles. These arguments may be derived from elements of worker ideology, from societal norms or from elements of the managerial ideology itself.

6.3.1 Resistance based upon legitimising principles; From 'efficiency' to 'morality'

What forms and types of legitimising principle and argument were used

by the worker representatives to challenge managerial decisions? A regular agenda item on the Works Committee was Health and Safety matters. In fact the Works Committee and the consultative members 'doubled' as a Health and Safety committee and representatives. Health and Safety hazards were raised by the worker representatives and noted by management. The health and safety issues raised appeared to be divided into two types. Firstly issues which were relatively simple and could be quickly remedied by management and secondly issues which were rather more intractable. Management usually acknowledged these issues as important but pleaded lack of money, resources, and space or pointed to negative effects on productivity. In May 1980, Bob, a consultative member, had just returned from a 'Health and Safety at Work' course for safety representatives. When the health and safety agenda item was reached he raised the problem of fumes in the Welding Shop. This was not a new problem and management had previously installed extractor bays and fans in an attempt to cure it. However, Bob argued that these were often not used by the welders because of the difficulties of maneouvering work pieces into the bays. To overcome the problem Bob proposed the purchase of a new helmet with a self-contained battery operated ventilation system. Whilst management agreed to investigate the helmet they intimated that they would not be prepared to buy them and scrap the present extraction system. What made this particular issue different from the others was that Bob attempted to utilise elements of managerial ideology and arguments in order to pursue his case. Thus he accepted the high cost outlay on the helmets but sought to argue that such costs might be recovered through better attendance, lower sickness rates and greater productivity. As he stated,

"It must be safer and more profitable for the firm in the long run".

Therefore, although unsuccessful in this instance, workers can utilise managerial ideology against itself in an attempt to challenge managerial decisions or rules.

By returning to the holiday entitlement and differential issue we can examine the use of other forms of legitimising argument and principle. During the Works Committee discussion, management were forced to resort to the simple assertion of managerial prerogative because the decision was imposed upon them by the Group Personnel Director. In response the worker representatives, led by Ron Rowland, attempted to use a series of legitimising arguments in order to get the decision reversed.

At an early stage Ron argued,

"This extra day that we've enjoyed has gone back something like twenty odd years".

He proceeded to describe the history of the extra day from its origins as two half days (one at Easter and one at Christmas) to its consolidation into one day at the joint agreement of both parties.

"So really that privilege, fringe benefit, that we've all enjoyed for years has been eroded".

In response to the management's point that they were still in line with the national agreement, Ron argued,

"... that fact is that we've always enjoyed here an extra day. In fact we've always led this part of the area in holidays. About the only thing we have led them in, but we have. About the only extra fringe benefit we enjoyed was an extra holiday".

At this point it became clear that several worker representatives were confused and unclear as to the precise nature of the present holiday arrangements. This allowed management the opportunity to describe them in great detail and thus deviate the discussion. Ron, however, attempted to focus attention back upon the precedent of the differential.

Ron "But this extra day has been going on for years and years and years. Why, why, why have you suddenly decided that we're having too much ..."

Dick "We haven't decided that ..."

Ron "You have, because always beforehand when any additional holidays became nationally agreed, you automatically granted it, but you still kept that extra day on. Now you've suddenly said 'no, we are going to take it off, we'll only give you one instead of two!'.

Finally at the end of the debate Ron attempted to use some comments attributed to the Managing Director to reinforce his precedent argument.

"... you've just mentioned that you're under no obligation to honour these agreements at all. But the Managing Director stood up in the Assembly Department and his own verbal words were, 'We always have and we always will honour these agreements. We intend to be one step ahead ... '. His word is as good as his writing surely?"

Surprisingly Ron received no support for his comment about the word of the Managing Director and Dick Rumens was able to move quickly on to other business. Management made no comment on Ron's statement.

This incident illustrates the use of several legitimising arguments. Firstly Ron uses the notion of consistency which refers to the fact that similar individuals or groups should be treated in a uniform manner and that similar events should evoke similar treatment. Thus he suggests that because in the past Bestobell have responded to new National Agreements by preserving their differential, then they should do so in this case. Ron also uses the principle of precedent which states that a decision or rule in a particular case may be cited in a subsequent case as a reason for identical treatment. Underlying his arguments, but not directly explicit in the extracts quoted, is the notion of 'fairness' or 'equity'. Management are seen as unfair by withdrawing a customarily enjoyed benefit. Naturally, these arguments or principles emerge in a confused manner and are woven together in the rhetoric of the speaker.

The use of the principle of precedent as a linguistic resource is illustrated by the 'diary' issue. This concerned the non-appearance of diaries which had traditionally been given to all employees with over ten years service as well as to customers, clients and suppliers. These were not produced for 1980 as a cost control measure by the Marketing Department. Unfortunately, this information was not relayed tc the rest of the management team and they were therefore slightly embarassed when the worker representatives raised the issue on the agenda. As far as they were concerned all that they could do during tke Committee Meeting was to explain the reasoning behind the decision ard make re-assuring comments. As Keith Mackney put it later,

"That wasn't managed very well, the whole business ... It was fundamental mismanagement, the whole thing".

Ron Rowland stated his case in the Works Committee meeting as follows,

"It has been the custom of this company for many years for anybody who reaches ten years service to be given a present of a diary every year with initials inscribed on it. Suddenly this year we didn't get it, there was no mention that we weren't going to get it, now why? ... This is a long service award".

Ron reiterated and rephrased his point several times and drew attention to the lack of consultation and communication. Later in the discussion he attempted to force management back to the point.

Ron "Does this mean then, that's the end of the diaries, then?"

Keith "I can't, well I can't answer that one"

Ron "It comes back to what we started off the meeting with. It's another fringe benefit lost".

It can be seen that the principle of precedent is very similar to the concept of the legitimacy of custom and practice.

The Health and Safety section of the Works Committee agenda demonstrated the existence of a 'covert' legitimising principle which justified resistance to managerially imposed rules. As Geoff Reid, the Production Manager, pointed out, despite raising and being involved in attempting to remedy a large number of safety hazards,

"There are other things that they don't really want to get too involved in. For example, I've raised on a number of occasions, although perhaps it's worn thin even for me now, this business of hard hats in the stores. You see, they will not wear them. And a lot of people will not wear protective spectacles in the Machine Shop. Now, you know,

we've raised this a number of times with the Works Committee and again, although they will pay semi lip-service to it, they'll always find reasons why they're not going to wear a hard hat in the Stores. Or a reason why they're not going to wear protective spectacles. They say, 'we're not going to wear hard hats in the stores, they're too uncomfortable and the guys won't wear them'".

The managerial rules imposed by management but reinforced by legislation requirements are resisted by the workforce. Peter Botell, who was responsible for health and safety matters, takes up the issue of enforcement of the rules.

"Now, you can say, 'OK, we are going to insist as part of the company rules that everybody will wear safety shoes and everybody will wear safety glasses' ... (...) ... Anybody found not wearing those, and also, say, hard hats in the stores, is in a deliberate breach of company rules and therefore one invokes the disciplinary procedure and you ultimately fire them ... (Pauses) ... That was more than likely the intention of the Act. But, you know what people are like (laughs) ... The vast majority of people do wear safety shoes, for the simple reason that they're getting a free pair of shoes, which means that they don't have to supply them. And, of course, anybody who has got prescription glasses wears safety glasses because they are getting free glasses. They are not damaging their glasses at work. Our problem area is really those who, like you and I, don't wear glasses. We're trying to persuade, and it is persuasion rather than force, we're trying to persuade people to wear safety glasses".

Therefore workers were willing to abide by the safety rules if they gained something from this observance. Thus management offered the inducements of a £9 subsidy on safety shoes and free safety glasses

for those with prescription lenses. The two remaining problem areas were thus safety glasses for other than spectacle wearers and hard hats. The rules in respect of these two were ignored and resisted by workers and their representatives. As Geoff Reid pointed out the arguments usually referred to lack of comfort and similar problems. I put the question to Tony Allen who at the time was a negotiating member.

PSK "Come on Tony. How valid is that argument? After all they wear the safety shoes don't they? And they're not all that comfortable".

Tony "Yeah, but they get nine quid for the boots. And it saves them ruining a pair of shoes with the acid and so on. Anyway, some of the blokes think it's a bit much. They'll be making rules on everything next. Can't even decide what to wear".

Thus when questioned the arguments of comfort or ease of operation evaporate and are replaced by a simple refusal. This is not a general rejection of managerial prerogative but a specific rejection of managerial authority where it stretches into areas which are seen as 'irrelevant'.

A discussion about stores reorganisation in the March 1979 meeting provided the occasion for one of the only uses of ethical or moral arguments that was observed. There had been a long history of discussions about the problem and the workers had begun to argue that the lack of space in the stores was resulting in poor working conditions for stores staff. The Production Manager opened the discussion.

"Not a lot of movement on this, unfortunately".

He reported that the stores personnel had suggested a re-organisation scheme designed to improve conditions in the stores area. The scheme had been examined by management and the Stores Supervisor but it in fact resulted in a 20% loss of storage space. This would be made worse by the fact that the new boiler conversion programme would result in an increase in the sale of air brakes and thus the need for more, not less, space. In the light of these problems management proposed to shelve the re-organisation plan and wait until the building of a new office block released space for a stores extension.

At this point, Bill Leach, one of the senior negotiating members, became extremely angry. Firstly, he categorically rejected the argument that the proposed re-organisation would result in a 20% loss of space. In this he was supported by Ivor Phillips the consultative member for the Stores. "There's no bloody way that you're going to lose 20% of the space, no bloody way". He also suggested that management should be able to come up with a plan for re-organisation. "Anyway you keep telling us you're the management. It's your job to manage. Well manage! You bloody well come up with a better plan!" The bulk of Bill's anger was reserved for what he saw as the 'uncaring' attitude of management. Thus he argued that "this proposed block is bloody pie-in-the-sky. Nothing's been done and nothing's likely to be done". (Indeed as of 1982 the block has still not received planning permission). "What about the lads working in those conditions now? I suppose they've got to wait for years. Those conditions are awful. It's time something was done for the lads! They need a better working atmosphere". Why, he argued, should the men always hear the brunt of any problem? It was about time that the company translated its words

into deeds and put its hand in its pocket in order to provide a fair deal for the storemen.

Bill was finally calmed and the issue was redirected to the question of the loss of space. A working party was arranged to consider the staff plan and other possible methods of reorganisation. However, although the issue had been temporarily resolved it continued to have its legacy. The use by Bill of moral and ethical arguments appeared to have touched a nerve. His criticisms 'jarred' against the management's purported 'caring and pluralist' style. From that meeting onwards the issue was referred to as 'Bill's issue or 'Bill's argument by Dick Rumens whenever it was discussed. There was always a reference to 'Bill's position before any detailed discussion of the problem. For example the issue was raised on the agenda in February 1980 and Dick Rumens commented,

"There's not much we can do in the short term, but it causes all sorts of problems. You see, we've raised the question that Bill (Leach) used to raise, the point about doing something in the stores. Well, of course, you don't want to go spending vast amounts of money to know that then you're likely to be moving to the end of number two building".

This device appeared to serve the purpose of preventing any repetition of the argument by worker representatives and demonstrating that management were aware of the problems.

6.3.2 Resistance by reference to a formal rule: 'King Kong's bananas'

We have seen, then, how worker resistance to managerial authority can stem from legitimising principles which form linguistic resources and which are drawn from what might be termed 'consensual' or 'societal' norms. However, workers can sometimes resist a managerial decision, action or initiative by reference to a formal written rule. Workers could, for example, resist by claiming a written right to be consulted over an issue. However, the resistance does not have to be directed to a specific decision or action. Workers can resist when management appear to be deviating from a written rule, even though no immediate problem has arisen.

For example a continual aggravation to the worker representatives was the quality of external recruits on the one hand and the lack of internal promotion prospects on the other. They saw this problem as being exacerbated by the desire of management to get workers onto shift work. As one of the works committee members said at an Agenda meeting,

"If King Kong walked into the factory with a bunch of bananas for his toolbox he would be taken on as long as he would work shifts".

This argument was strenuously denied by Keith Mackney. The workers thus found it difficult to challenge management, partly because they knew Keith's response and partly because some of them really perceived such matters as falling squarely within the managerial prerogative. "They ain't going to discuss that with us, that's their business". Thus their only way to express concern involved bringing to the attention of management incidents where the procedures (unilaterally decided by management) had not been followed.

This process is reflected in the following Works Committee minutes,

"The representatives said that they were concerned that certain Works vacancies had recently been advertised externally without internal advertising. The Personnel Manager said that it was the Company's policy to advertise all Works vacancies internally and he would ensure that this happened".
(Minute 117)

"The Personnel Manager said that the normal procedure for recruitment advertising was to advertise vacancies internally and in the local media. Representatives felt that procedures had broken down in a recent incident and that management had failed to notify employees of an existing vacancy. The Personnel Manager and Production Manager said that they would investigate the alleged incident".
(Minute 194)

Another example illustrates the situation where a managerial decision is challenged by reference to a written rule or procedure. In this case an employee was dismissed for poor performance and among the reasons given by the representatives for his retention and the reversing of the dismissal decision was the fact that the correct procedures had not been followed. This is reported in the Works Committee minutes.

"Representatives said that they were concerned that an employee with two months service was dismissed after only being verbally warned that his work was not to a standard expected by the Company.

The Personnel Manager replied that the employee had received a number of verbal warnings regarding sub-standard work and was dismissed as there had been no improvement".
(Minute 231)

It is interesting that the Personnel Manager makes no formal denial of the allegation concerning the lack of a written warning despite the fact that it is stipulated in the disciplinary procedure. (See Appendix B). The extent of managerial domination within Bestobell Mobrey is perhaps aptly illustrated by the way in which management handle and resolve this issue.

6.3.3 Issue definition and rehearsal: 'Bloody stock control'

The legitimising principles and arguments utilised by both sides do not just 'crystallise' at the Works Committee meetings but one instead rehearsed in advance. Issues are identified, refined and linked to appropriate legitimising arguments by a process of rehearsal. The worker representatives held meetings one week in advance of the Works Committee meetings in order to collect items for the agenda. Several different processes appear to to occur in these Agenda meetings.

Firstly the meetings provide an opportunity for issues to be reworded in appropriate language for the agenda. This is usually performed by one of the older, more experienced, worker representatives. Thus the issues are discussed and tabled and then summarised by one of the representatives. Three other processes can be illustrated by reference to one agenda meeting in February 1980. John Moule raised a problem concerning the lack of stillages and standard cages and suggested that it be put on the agenda for the February meeting of the Committee. Hovever, Ron Rowland who was compiling the agenda appeared to favour a different tactic.

"It's a question of what he comes up with tomorrow, next week rather, isn't it? ... When he goes through the Chairman's Monthly Report it'll probably say something that we can fire a hole in, fire a rocket at".

Thus the agenda meetings often served the purpose of enabling tactical decisions to be made about the best way to pursue issues. Similarly, at the same agenda meeting the representatives all complained that they had not received the minutes of the last Works Committee meeting. Ron Rowland stated that he would take it up with Peter Botell when he went up to Personnel to finalise the agenda. However, Ivor disagreed,

"I don't think it's worth you seeing to it, Ron, when you go up there. I think it should be fetched up in the meeting, so that we can really get at them about it, because it's all 'lackadaisy' again ain't it? If it comes up in the meeting and we gives 'em a row about it, maybe more will be done, than just you telling 'em that we haven't got 'em ... Cos, as I say, as soon as they get outta that meeting they've forgotten everything, that's the way it seems to me".

Another process that was observed in the agenda meetings was the identification of 'real' issues or issue 'definition'. Thus Meg Surgeon raised the issue of delays in assembly which were caused by charges in material issue procedures by the component stores. On certain jobs the female assembly operatives have to go to the stores to withdraw certain expensive components as and when they are required. At one time they could simply walk in and take what they wanted. The new procedure meant that the stores were locked and the operatives had to wait to be 'served' by stores personnel. During the agenda meeting the representatives spent a long time discussing the 'correct' procedure and reaching a common understanding of the problem. During this discussion it became clear that the 'real' problem was not the change in procedure per se, or the delays, but the fact that the standard times for assembly jobs were now 'tight' due to the extra waiting time involved.

This was eventually noticed by Ron who suggested that, "really what we're talking about is longer times on the assembly jobs".

One final process to emerge from the agenda meetings was the fact that issues are rehearsed, not only to achieve a common approach in negotiations, but because the process of rehearsal itself can serve to strengthen group cohesiveness. Items and issues are discussed which unite the worker representatives and provide them with a common perception. Thus Meg Surgeon raised the problem of fluctuating workloads in the Assembly Department. This was duly noted for inclusion on the agenda. However, the representatives began to discuss the source of the problem.

Ivor "That is the fault of Stock Control"

Meg "It is Stock Control ..."

Ivor "Stock Control is, everything that happens here ..."

Meg "It is ..."

Ivor "... is their fault and Rumens won't have it because it's his baby. And that is the fault all the way through this place ..."

Meg "It is ..."

(.....)

Ivor "It's a management problem again"

Ralph "... at the last meeting they said it was our fault. It's nothing to do with the blokes, it's entirely their fault. They expect the shop floor to get them out of the mire every bloody month".

The representatives then began to quote from their own experiences, evidence of managerial incompetence. The effect was mutually to reinforce their perceptions and their definition of organisational reality. Ivor cited the case of a job worth £15,000 held up for four small washers. Meg described assembly jobs held up by the absence of metal earthing tags, while Ralph maintained a job held up by a lack of studs. Whilst most of these stories could be apocryphal, or have some perfectly reasonable explanation, they served to generate a group consciousness.

Ivor "It is, it's, well, it's disgusting..."

John "It's Stock Control again isn't it?"

Ivor "And they've always been the same"

Roy "The problem area's Stock Control"

John "... and you can't run Stock Control down, I've run it down to Rumens and 'Reidy' and they're, they look at me ..."

Ivor "John, I've ... you know that I've pressed it, up in meetings, haven't I, about stock control don't exist ... but Rumens won't have it because that's his baby".

The representatives then moved on from the failings of Stock Control to the more general problems of management, making statements as follows.

Ivor "It is definitely bad organisation by management ... (unclear) ... It still goes on the same way; once they get out of our meeting there, they forget everything".

(.....)

Ivor "If you remember last month now, when that oil ... the boiler had gone up the creek. Now in the meeting they said, 'yes' I could have a boiler in my place, didn't they? 'Yeah, no problem, yeah'. There's a month gone now. I haven't got nothing, and some of the days in my place it was 47 degrees. It's a month. 'Yeah, we'll get you one easy'. Have I got one, have I hell!

(.....)

Ron "It don't do to tell them exactly what goes on because they got an answer for it. They're such a devious bloody lot they cover up for one another".

What is interesting is that, despite the rehearsal and agreement, the issues often failed to materialise in the rehearsed form at the Works Committee meeting. Obviously there are areas in the procedure where issues can get 'lost' or wordings can get changed. After the agenda meeting one of the negotiating members takes the list of items to Peter Botell and a joint agenda is agreed which is published by management. There appear to be two possiblities which could explain how issues get 'lost' or become 'changed'. The first refers to the well-known psychological fact that when isolated from the support of the reference group the individual becomes reticent and vulnerable. Thus management may be able to dictate the form or wording of items for the agenda. Or the representative may be unable or unwilling to put the group point of view when confronted by management. Secondly, management have a certain degree of latitude in the final wording of the items for the agenda as they publish it. Thus the wording of items could be changed in order to 'slant' them in a particular direction.

What happened to the issues that we have seen rehearsed above? The issue of lack of stillages and cages appeared on the Agenda (Item 4a) despite Ron Rowlands intention to keep it off and to raise it instead during the Chairman's Monthly Report. Similarly, despite having agreed that the real problem of the delays in assembly was job timings and loss of bonus, it was not raised in this form. The item appeared on the Agenda (Item 4b) as 'Change of Switch System in Assembly'. When it was taken in the Works Committee meeting it was easily resolved by management and the representatives made no mention of the effect on job times and thus bonuses. The issue about the fluctuating workloads in assembly also passed off quietly and without any reference to the failings of Stock Control. The main point here is the key importance of linguistic resources. If workers are to challenge managerial hegemony they need to identify 'strong' issues and link these to appropriate and powerful legitimising principles. These have to then be pursued in the appropriate forum in terms of rhetoric with a degree of skill. Perhaps the inability of the worker representatives at Bestobell Mobrey to achieve this explains the high degree of hegemonic domination by management. In fact, as we shall see, the only issue mentioned above to be vigorously pursued at the Works Committee meeting was the rather trivial issue of Ivor's heating in the stores.

6.3.4 Active resistance: The ultimate sanction?

Whilst most of the resistance to managerial domination took the form of the mobilisation and utilisation of linguistic resources, there were occasions when the workforce attempted to utilise their physical resources and power base. Thus the workforce called strikes twice during the period covered by the research study. The first occasion was in the course of the 1979 Wage Review.

After a mass meeting on the 8th January 1979, the worker representatives called a one day strike for all employees in the Machine Shop, Welding Shop and Inspection to be held on Wednesday 10th January 1979. Simultaneously, it was decided to instigate a policy of no overtime working and non co-operation from Monday 15th January for all employees in the Assembly and Stores areas. The next day, the 9th January, in a special negotiating meeting, the Personnel Manager stated,

"that should sanctions take place, management would not negotiate under duress and would cease overtime with immediate effect. No payments would be made to any employee who took part in any stoppage, attendance bonus and sick pay included. If a policy of non-cooperation resulted in a reduction of output, the 6.9% Productivity Bonus would be reduced accordingly ... The Personnel Manager concluded by saying that confrontation was not in either side's interest and he asked representatives to reconsider any action regarding sanctions".
(Minute 163)

After another mass meeting the representatives agreed to withdraw sanctions in the light of the intention to continue negotiations. This has to be viewed in the context of the negotiations. The starting position was that management initially offered 5.5% on basic rates, while the workforce asked for a restructuring of the grade system, the consolidation of a 6.9% Productivity Bonus and a 10% increase on the new consolidated bonus rate. The result of the final settlement was an average increase of 8% and the introduction of a new grade. However, there was no consolidation of the Productivity Bonus. (For details of the 1979 Wage Review see Appendix E).

The second time that a strike was called was during the Wage Review in July 1980. On this occasion the negotiating representatives were led

by a newly elected and relatively unexperienced negotiator, Peter Dormer. Again a strike was called but this time the workers actually went out of the gates. However, management repeated their argument about not negotiating while sanctions were in operation and the workforce returned to work the next day. In both these situations the prime moving force for the strike action was the Machine Shop but their support in both cases evaporated after management's statement about no negotiations under duress.

Keith Mackney thought that the one day strike had been a useful educative event.

"In a way it was quite productive in that I think that they would think very strongly before ever trying that again, which has to be the right approach".

This indeed seemed to be the view of the majority of worker representatives to whom I talked. "We should never have done that". "We were pushed into that, it was wrong". "It was a waste of time, They won". These were some of the typical comments. Dick Rumens took a more objective and philosophical view of the workers' attempts to use their physical resources by the withdrawal of labour. He argued that the basic problem with the negotiating members was their lack of strategic and tactical knowledge and awareness.

"... you see, that's what bothered me about the Committee. They could have chosen better times. They chose the wrong issues and the wrong times. It's no point in having a one day strike at times when it suits the Company".

6.4 The exercise of transformative capacity

So far we have sought to demonstrate how the parties utilised legitimising principles and arguments in order either to preserve managerial domination or to challenge it. This, of course, refers to the level of mediation. We have also seen how these principles and arguments are related to ideology on the structural level particularly in the case of management. However, legitimising principles and arguments are only used as linguistic resources in an attempt to exercise transformative capacity on the level of action. At this level it is often the way in which such principles and arguments are expressed in rhetoric that becomes important and influences the result of the conflict. Obviously such conflicts arise only in cases where the prerogative and legitimacy of management are contested. As we have seen the legitimacy of management may be contested in two different ways. The first is where a managerial rule or decision is opposed by the workforce. Thus the substantive or procedural content of a rule or decision may become the subject of negotiation between the parties. The result of this negotiation will be a function of the strength of the legitimising arguments utilised and the reserves of power resources held by both sides. The second encompasses situations where what is contested is an argument, principle or ideological position. Thus while at the micro level, principles and arguments are contested as a preclude to a substantive result; at the macro level they can exist on their own, independent of any specific and immediate substantive decision. We are now in a position to study some of the contested issues that arose in the Works Committee forum. We can examine which side, through the exercise of 'transformative capacity', managed to achieve its objectives and analyse why this actually occurred. We can also examine the reasons why other outomes to the issues did not result.

6.4.1 Issue One - "The one that got away"

The major issue upon which the workers were most likely to be successful has already been mentioned in earlier sections. This was where the customary holiday differential was removed by management. The management at Bestobell Mobrey were generally not in favour of the decision but were constrained by orders from the Group Personnel Director. Thus the management felt that there was little else they could do other than fall back upon the simple assertion of managerial prerogative. Thus, in this situation there were very few legitimising principles that management could deploy. On the other hand the worker representatives, and Ron Rowland in particular, used a lot of legitimising arguments and principles which, as we have seen, were drawn from what we might term 'consensual' or 'societal' norms. Thus the worker representatives enjoyed a considerable advantage in terms of linguistic resources. Yet in the end it was management who were successful and the holiday differential was lost. Why did this happen? In order to answer this we have to move from legitimising arguments and resources to the use of rhetoric on the level of action. Thus during the discussions and negotiations several factors prevented the worker representatives from pressing home their advantage in terms of principles and argument.

Firstly Ron Rowland was continually prevented from developing his arguments and principles, not by management, but by his own side. Thus at several points in the discussion different worker representatives interrupted to ask factual questions about the holiday entitlement. These questions revealed their confusion and ignorance regarding the existing holiday arrangements and the Personnel Manager was thus able to respond a long time explaining the detail and by doing so took the steam out of the discussion.

Secondly management were able to deflect the discussion onto another topic and thus defuse worker resistance to the rule change. In response to Ron Rowland's arguments about the precedent of an extra days holiday Keith Mackney interjected to state;

"Well, you know, the company, as Mr. Rumens has said, is under no obligation at all to do anything about holidays. The situation at the moment, interestingly enough, is that quite a lot of people don't manage to take their holidays in any case".

If this was the case, argued the representatives then management were not enforcing their own rules. Some representatives suggested management were in fact allowing people not to take their full entitlement and were then 'buying it back' off them. This discussion continued for some time enabling Keith Mackney to talk at length on the application of the holiday rules.

"I think you'll find that since I've been here, and I know that last year we were living out something which was already in existence, but really since I've had effect in this place, the rules have been applied and the only way that anybody can be able to hold any holiday back is ... is if they actually booked it at the end of the year and through pressure of work they have not been able to take it at that particular time" ... (moves on to details of the rules).

As a result of these lengthy digressions Ron Rowland found it very difficult to resurrect the original issue. He tried to bring the discussion back to the holiday differential but none of the other worker representatives appeared ready to back him up and management were able to move quickly on to the next item.

Looking back on the issue, management were both surprised that they had upheld their decision and unhappy about what they had done. Geoff Reid remembered the issue as follows,

"I was surprised actually that they, that it really sort of petered out, didn't it? Because as I remember it Ron Rowland was really trying to push to retain his extra day and I think there may have been one or two murmurs from the other members of the Committee. But in fact management seemed to be, in the form of Keith Mackney, very, very determined on this one ... And Ron put up a good argument there. I mean, he sort of put up an argument with regard to the fact that he felt his fringe benefits were being eroded away. And, yeah, I believe that in this instance they really let go. They let go very easily".

He suggested that if the worker representatives had rehearsed their arguments properly and presented a united front then they would have come a lot nearer to achieving their objectives.

"I believe that we got away lightly with that".

Dick Rumens was also questioned about the way in which management had succeeded on this issue.

Dick "Well, my view ... er (laughs) ... officially or otherwise? (laughs)".

PSK "Well I've already talked to Keith and he's been sort of frank over the issue ..."

Dick "Well, I think we did the dirty"

PSK "Yeah?"

Dick "I think we really played that wrongly. I mean not from our position. I mean, OK, you see there are situations. I mean Keith would probably agree with me and ... but I have a hat to wear and I wear it. I supported the management's view on the basis that, 'look you haven't lost a day', so, you know ... I think we were petty, I think we should have given it. ... They should have pushed the argument that we were being petty".

PSK "If you had been facing union members, shop stewards, would the result have been different?"

Dick "Oh I don't think so, I don't think it's a question of being union members or not. It's a question of keeping your eye on the ball. I mean don't get sidetracked into totally other issues when you can stick. Know what argument you're going to put forward and stick to it, don't get sidetracked".

Ron Rowland remembered the issue in a similar way.

"Yeah, they had 'em totally bamboozled didn't they! Couldn't stick to the point. They're always the bloody same. We could have pushed them harder on that".

This issue demonstrates the importance of tactical skills in the exercise of transformative capacity. If worker resistance had been united and solid management would probably have conceded despite the edict from Group. The worker side showed a lack of negotiating skill. They had obviously not rehearsed their arguments and would have done much better if Ron had been left to lead the issue all the way through the discussion.

There was very little 'negotiating discipline' on their side of the table. Management, however, were skilful enough to exploit the confusion in the ranks of the worker representatives and deviate discussion from the major issue. It may also be suggested that the infrequency of worker 'victories' at these meetings might partly explain the reluctance to pursue issues such as this one. This reluctance is thus a function of managerial domination.

6.4.2 Issue Two - 'Steamrollered'

We can now move from an issue where management were prepared to give ground, given the right degree of forceful opposition to an issue where they were totally unwilling to concede at all. This issue was the switching of the date of the annaul Wage Review from January to July. When the 1980 Wage Review started, management offered a 'package deal' to the workforce. Firstly they wanted to change the date of the annual review to July. Secondly they were willing to offer 3½% on basic rates for the period January to July 1980. Finally this increase was to be subject to an acceptance by the workforce of management's use of contract labour where necessary. During the course of negotiations management, faced with total opposition to their proposals, gradually increased their offer. They raised the percentage gradually from 3½% to 4½% and finally to 6%. They also guaranteed to start negotiations in July 1980 from a minimum figure of 8%. Eventually, in early January, the workforce accepted the offer.

During the course of the negotiations Keith Mackney informed the researcher that the reason for the change in the review date was in order to minimise the effect of wage increases upon the company's accounts for the year 1979/80.

This was deemed by the Group management to be important if another bid from B.T.R was to be resisted. An additional benefit from this change was that the review was now in the summer holiday period and at a time of year which was usually relatively slack. This, therefore, had the effect of reducing the potential power of the workforce. Interestingly this was not the only action of this kind that management had considered. Thus at one stage management actively pursued the idea of altering the technological lay-out of the Machine Shop and related operation in an attempt to disrupt or reduce the power base of the Batchmatic operators.

Management had to find other legitimising arguments in support of the change of review date. In fact they used a variety of arguments and these are reflected in the minutes of the negotiations.

"The Personnel Manager said that management were keen to pursue their original approach of a six month review ... and to adopt a fresh fields approach in July. Management realised that this was a new approach ..."
(14th December 1979)

"The Personnel Manager replied that Management felt very strongly that the change of review dates should take place to bring both the Works and Staff Reviews in line. There was a lot to be gained by works employees from such a move, Management were not looking for a cheap settlement. There would be greater protection for works employees by achieving a six month agreement as there may well be a government clamp down on wage increases towards the end of 1980".
(18th December 1979)

"Management were now feeling very strongly that the review date must change to July and were concerned that there may be a pay freeze at

the end of 1980... Management had strong reasons for wishing to stick to this intention to bring the Staff and Works reviews together as this would eliminate the bad feeling which occurred when one set of employees leapfrogged over the other".
(21st December 1979)

These, then, were some of the arguments presented to the worker representatives in an attempt to persuade them of the need for a move in the review date.

As far as I could ascertain, the negotiating members did not question the validity of these arguments, perhaps because of their concentration upon the percentage increase. Another point which the negotiating representatives did not appear to appreciate was that the acceptance of contract labour was only a managerial bargaining counter. As Keith Mackney argued,

"... its the ritual lamb. And when they do eventually come back and we do start to reach agreement and they say 'but we're not accepting that', then we shall say, then, alright".

However Keith suggested that the use of contract labour was a useful legitimising principle designed to convince the workforce that management was serious when it argued that they could not have 'something for nothing'.

"... it backs up the fact that we've said, you know, that we can't give anything for nothing".

This, then, appears to be an issue upon which management were totally unwilling to concede. As Dick Rumens argued,

"You see the areas that we did steamroller through if you think about it are things like the switching of the date from January to July. We steamrollered that through; we just pushed it through. We were going to do it and that was that, you know, without negotiation".

Whilst they were totally unwilling to move on the issue of the date, management did include in the 'package' one issue upon which they would move and a bargaining counter that they were prepared to drop. Even if the negotiating members had questioned the validity of the legitimising arguments supporting the move date, it is unlikely that they could have been successful on this issue. However, it is possible that they could have forced management to a large percentage deal for the six month period. This again illustrates the superiority in terms of strategy and tactics by management in negotiations.

6.4.3 Issue Three - 'Take it or leave it'

Perhaps the major price of procedural rule making occurred during the research study concerned the development of an Extended Leave policy. As we have already described, Bestobell Mobrey employs a large number of immigrants of which the highest proportion by far are Asian in origin. For a long time an informal custom and practice arrangement had existed whereby workers could take extended leave of absence to visit relatives in other continents. While generally applied to immigrant workers visiting the Indian sub-continent, other workers also utilised the arrangement to visit the U.S.A, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This informal practice was being threatened in two ways. Firstly the numbers of workers using the arrangement was increasing and this sometimes caused staffing problems in production departments. Secondly there had been several recent incidents concerning workers returning long after their expected date of return.

The extended leave arrangements were raised on the Works Committee Agenda by the worker representatives. When the item was taken, Keith Mackney was, however, the first to speak.

"Following a spate of problems with extended leave, I and my department have been considering the whole policy of extended leave, so I'm now taking the opportunity, as somebody has raised it through the agenda, of passing a few comments on it. Interestingly, Group are also interested and they've come up with a draft policy as well for extended leave and we're taking one or two ideas from their policy as well, which we'll then put into a draft policy and submit to you for discussion. Very likely at the next Works Committee meeting in a month's time. And we'll put it before you for your comments, adjustments, whatever and discussions.

He then proceeded to outline the main points of his draft policy. Thus it appeared that the committee was going to be used in its consultative role over what was essentially an important procedural set of rules.

The representatives appeared to accept most of Keith's points but discussion focused upon one proposed clause which stated that if a worker did not return by the expected date then his contract would be held to have been frustrated and he would therefore be dismissed. Bob, one of the consultative members, asked what would happen if an individual was unable, for whatever reason, to return on time and whether any reasons would be acceptable. Keith admitted that dismissal would not, in fact, be automatic. These were grounds for lateness which were reasonable and which management would accept. Bob then attempted to discover what management considered reasonable and what they would accept by listing possible reasons including airline strikes and sickness. Keith agreed that management would probably accept the former

but not necessarily the latter even if supported by a medical certificate. The illness would have to be fairly serious to be accepted as an excuse by management. This aroused a certain degree of discontent amongst the worker representatives.

At this stage the particular case which had in fact initiated the formalisation of the policy and informed much of the preceeding discussion came to the surface. It was raised by Ron Rowland and concerned a worker called Raja in the Welding Shop.

"We have a case, one fellow, who received a warning letter. You're probably aware, most of you are aware of this, and he feels that he's been unjustly treated and he wants it put, discussed here ... (General discussion all at once)... You did say that you were going to put it on (the agenda) anyway, so, I mean, he insisted. I went to see Peter and I asked him if he could rephrase the letter. He (Raja) feels that the letter is badly worded; its loaded against him. He feels that this was unjust. I went to see Peter who said that no, the company was adamant that the letter was fair and would remain as it was. Now, he (Raja) wanted it discussed here. He wants it recorded for some reason better known to himself that it has been discussed".

It seems fairly clear here that Ron is letting it be known that he feels that he has done his job by raising Raja's case but he does not really support it. However, as we shall see there are differences on the side of the worker representatives.

At this point the Chairman was asked if he would allow the issue to be discussed. Before he could reply, Keith intervened;

"Well in fact yes, that would be my first comment, it is the sort of problem which should be raised really through the normal grievance procedure if he feels he's got a grievance; rather than as a point across the table here. But since it has been raised I will pass comment on it. And that is that, in fact, in the particular case that we're talking about I think that the company would have been totally justified in saying that the particular contract of employment. And indeed we would say this on another occasion, ... that the contract of employment had been terminated, had been frustrated by that particular employee not having returned to the UK. And I think the fact that he has been given only a warning, hasn't had his employment terminated, frankly means that he's got off pretty lightly. And when we do tighten this policy up and were he to have done, you know, were it to have operated under the new arrangement, he would have indeed been deemed to have terminated his employment with the Company. So I reckon he's got off pretty lightly but if he does want to raise it, he ought to raise it through the normal grievance procedure".

Ivor "But the letter 'e got is a final warning... It sounds a bit bitchy for someone being four weeks overdue".

Keith " It doesn't for somebody, it doesn't, it doesn't ..."

Dick (Incredulous and interrupting) "... for somebody being four weeks overdue. And you think that's tough!"

The discussion then focused upon the minutiae of the Raja case until Dick attempted to summarise the feelings of management.

Dick "I think there's a total lack of responsibility on the individual's behalf either to let the company know what was

going on when he was still away, and he had every opportunity to do that and made no effort, but no effort was made. The company have then to go to a lot of trouble to find out whether this particular individual was back by Peter having to go round to this person's house to see if he was in; and then not to come in when he said he was going to come in was a total lack of responsibility on the individual's part towards his employer. And that in my book is enough grounds for the man to have frustrated and terminated his own contract of employment. And I think we took a very lenient view and I doubt whether next time we would take such a lenient view".

Keith "Well, we certainly wouldn't"

Dick "You know, I wish, we've got to get away from this attitude of talking about rights of individuals because just as individuals have rights, they have responsibilities, not only to the company but to the people they work with".

What then emerges from the above discussion? Firstly while the representatives are generally happy with the outlined policy they are unhappy with the dismissal clause because they feel that it does not allow for 'unavoidable' lateness. They are also upset that management will not necessarily accept certain normally reasonable excuses such as certified illness as valid. Bob stated after the meeting that he had been trying to reject the automatic dismissal and to get management to provide guidelines for valid and invalid reasons for lateness of return. Some of the representatives (such as Ivor) are willing to use the Raja case to argue that the final warning is too harsh a penalty for this particular offence.

Faced with these arguments and possible 'slippage' of the rules, Keith Mackney attempts to summarise the debate.

"The only really concrete way to make this absolutely foolproof is to say 'look, if you don't come back on that day, you've done it,' and that's that. And then if you want to re-apply when you do come back to the UK, fine, we'll consider you for re-employment. Now that is one way of doing it ..... If that's what you're saying round this table it will certainly fit in with the thinking of the management".

Thus in effect Keith was saying to the worker representatives that they could take it or leave it. Whilst the item had been introduced in a consultative light, if they persisted in their disagreement then management would simply impose their own policy. When I questioned Keith later he argued that he was unwilling to change the policy to allow greater flexibility.

The issue closed but it was obvious that the majority of the representatives were still not in favour of the automatic dismissal clause. This undercurrent was still present in the next meeting when Keith presented his final written version, distributed it and asked for comments within 48 hours. (See Appendix F for details). Bob asked what the agreement mentioned in section 9 of the policy consisted of.

Bob "I just wondered, what sort of agreement have they got to sign before they go on holiday, like..."

Keith "It's a letter. Have you not seen one? It's ah ..."

Bob "No. Is it just a normal ..."

Keith "It's just a letter that says, it points out most of the points, thats all and explains what money you'll get when, and what money you'll get when you get back. And it really just states the main points that are in the policy".

Jan "It states in the letter that if you're not back in time you could be dismissed".

Keith "Well thats item 11 on the document"

The representatives were unable to mount any further challenge to the policy and so it was accepted in the form originally proposed by management.

6.4.4 Issue Four - 'Ivor's heating'

While the three issues that we have examined so far were reasonably important, this next issue is in comparison rather trivial. However, it does make some useful points about the lack of power of the workforce at Bestobell Mobrey and in particular their lack of understanding of the dynamics of a power relationship.

Ivor Phillips was a consultative member of the Works Committee representing the Stores areas. All through the winter of 1979/1980 Ivor had complained to supervision about the lack of heating in a Portakabin store where he spent part of his working day and also in other parts of the Stores. A series of heaters had broken down in the main stores area and temporary jet heaters promised by supervision and management never materialised.

The issue was first raised during the Health and Safety agenda item in the January Works Committee meeting. Ivor raised the problem but received

the fairly standard management response which was observed on numerous occasions. That is, management argued that it was a problem for local supervision who would sort it out. This, however did not generally seem to happen. This led to the worker representatives being cynical about managerial response on the health and safety issues. As Dick Rumens commented,

"There's also a great tendency to believe that management don't do anything about some of these things. I think that is also partly true. I think that's a failing of people further down the scale - supervisors again and managers - just not doing what they should do".

In this particular case nothing was done about the heating problem by the time of the next meeting. Hence Ivor raised the issue again.

"A month ago, we had this oil business, this furnace wasn't working properly. It was 47 degrees in where I was working. 'Oh don't worry Ivor' (said ironically) in the meeting, 'you can get a fire any time' ... (pauses) ... That was a month ago. I suffered for a fortnight with the cold in there. I think I even talked to you about it (turns to Dick) and that's about as far as it's gone. I think it's bloody disgusting".

Dick referred the problem to Geoff Reid who agreed with Ivor and stated that he had actually set in motion the order which should have resulted in Ivor getting his heater. Dick suggested that local supervision be chased over the issue. None of the other representatives intervened to support Ivor and to suggest that management had badly failed to resolve a simple trivial issue. Indeed instead there was a general air of hilarity around the table. The representatives appeared from their jokes to view this as 'Ivor's problem' rather than viewing it in the context of a power relationship.

Ivor did not see the funny side of the issue and began to utilise a persuasive legitimising argument that had been generally agreed by the representatives at previous agenda meetings.

"Now if it was one of the office staff, they did threaten to come out once in there, didn't they? If they hand't have got any heaters by eleven o'clock they were going out. Was it there by eleven o'clock? ... it was? But when you come down to us then ... (interrupted)".

Despite invoking this argument, Ivor still got no support from his fellow representatives.

The interesting point about this issue, despite its triviality, was that it afforded the representatives an opportunity to achieve a 'victory' and 'success' from the committee system. As we have seen on most issues, even ones which they should have won, the worker representatives were generally unsuccessful. This issue, which was exacerbated by basic managerial incompetence, offered the chance for the representatives to restore some of their credibility. Yet it became clear that they did not perceive it in this way. "Oh that was just Ivor being Ivor!" Yet the issue was not perceived in exactly this way by Dick Rumens. He interjected to stop the hilarity.

"No, we must watch this because it means, really, we're not doing what we said we'd do. So there is a serious side to that. You know, if it is brought up here we must ensure that a satisfactory answer is given".

This can be viewed in two ways. On the one hand, in the late Vic Feather's terms, he is 'giving the other side the bus fare home'. As Ivor was unable to force his point or arguments home, Dick responds by acknowledging the seriousness and importance of the complaint. Secondly it may be suggested that he is seeking to preserve the effectiveness of

the committee. This will be explored later. It emerged later in an interview with Geoff Reid that there was another reason behind the unwillingness of management to solve at least part of Ivor's heating problem. The area concerned was a Portakabin store.

"So we tried to avoid putting in some form of heating into that area because, bear in mind, that it was in fact purely a carry-over store. It wasn't something that you had to go in there ideally and sit and do your paperwork. You just went in there, picked the jobs off the shelf and you brought them back and put them into your area where you worked. So we tended to try and avoid putting heating into this big metal box. Because if we had have done, we felt that he would have probably sort of gone in there and ... well ... you never know (in a low voice)".

6.4.5 The transformative capacity of the parties

The obvious point to emerge from our examination of some of the issues which arose at the Works Committee is that it was management who were able to achieve their objectives through the exercise of transformative capacity. However, that power was based not directly upon physical resources but much more so upon linguistic resources. Management achieved their desired result on all the issues described above. On some, such as the moving of the date of the Annual Wage Review and the Extended Leave policy this is perhaps not surprising. On the cases of the holiday entitlement and the heating in the stores, it is perhaps more surprising but still understandable. It can be seen as a reflection of managerial dominance. A dominance which is reproduced within Bestobell Mobrey hegemonically by the use of ideology.

What also emerges from this analysis is the weakness of the worker representatives in terms of interactive negotiation skills. Hence even when they have a set of good legitimising arguments they fail to exploit them around the Works Committee table. Several deficiencies have been noted. Firstly there was generally an inadequate level of issue rehearsal in Agenda meetings and the arguments identified and rehearsed often failed to materialise. Secondly, too many representatives spoke on any one issue. This degree of interaction combined with a lack of knowledge of the major legitimising principles often led to the worker side being sidetracked from the issue at hand.

Finally the transformative capacity of management can be seen to be based upon the degree of acceptance of managerial authority by the workforce. On several issues management were simply able to assert managerial prerogative and this was not challenged to any great extent by the worker representatives. The only exception to this pattern was the case of 'Dick's Rocket'. Thus the dominance of management on the structural and ideological level is reflected in their success in exercising transformative capacity and this success, in turn, reinforces their dominant position.

6.5 The hegemony of management

From observational and other evidence gathered during the research study, I wish to argue that the management at Bestobell Mobrey during this period pursued a strategy of hegemonic domination. As we have seen this was pursued on many occasions purposively by the management. However as the 'right to manage' and 'managerial prerogative' are 'taken-for-granted' in the managerial philosophy there is a sense in which this strategy or 'line' was unconsciously pursued. More specifically I will seek to suggest that this hegemony took a

particular form and was operated and perpetrated by particular members of the management team. The particular 'brand' of hegemony in operation in Bestobell Mobrey is probably best illustrated in Chapter 4 by Goldman and Van Houten's notion of the 'hegemony of bureaucratic procedure' and Friedman's concept of 'responsible autonomy'. The members of management responsible for this hegemonic domination were Keith Mackney and Dick Rumens.

In order to understand the nature and form of this hegemony it is necessary to trace the history of its development. Both Keith Mackney and Dick Rumens were relatively new to their respective posts at the beginning of the research study. Keith was new to the company, having arrived from EMI where he was Personnel Manager for a small production unit. The background in EMI was, of course, completely different from Bestobell Mobrey, being fully unionised and with a fairly sophisticated set of personnel policies and procedures. As Keith described it,

"The environment's completely different because you had procedures which you followed, quite closely defined ones. And you were getting the 'line' all the time from the central personnel function".

Upon arriving at Bestobell Mobrey, Keith suffered what he described as 'culture shock'. The company was non-unionised and underdeveloped in terms of policies and procedures. From what evidence is available it appears that there was a fair degree of unrest among the workforce and in response to this, and the threat of unionisation, Keith's predecessor had established the Works and Staff Committee systems. By the time Keith arrived the Works Committee was dominated, on the worker side, by a group of skilled workers including the Batchmatic operators and

led by Jan Arends. Dick, on the other hand, had previously worked in Mobrey in charge of purchasing and stock control and before that in Bestobell Seals.

One of the major points to strike the outside observer about Bestobell Mobrey was the rapid increase in the number of formal rules, policies and procedures in recent years. It may be suggested that this increase in rule-making activity formed part of a wider strategy of 'incorporation'. Rules are, of course, mechanisms of control. They lay down prescribed behaviours and, to the extent that they are legitimised, they serve to control the workforce. Several points need to be made about the use of rules in Bestobell Mobrey. Firstly, formal rules, policies and procedures, tended to be introduced in situations where 'informal' rules had lost their effectiveness and where management needed to regain lost control. Perhaps an example of this would be the introduction of the Extended Leave Policy. Secondly, management tended to stress in Works Committee discussions that the rules were absolute and could not be 'bent' even in special circumstances. Two relatively minor incidents can be used to demonstrate this point. A rule had been established that each employee in the Production area was entitled to a £9 allowance each year towards the cost of a pair of safety shoes. After a couple of years the worker representatives began to argue that as shoes in different departments wore out at different rates (some departments using acids for example), the allowance should be paid and not annually, but upon the wearing out of the individual's shoes. This could be as short a period as six months or as long as eighteen months or more. Thus it was argued that this would not result in an overall increase in costs. However, management resisted this proposal vigorously arguing that the rule was

inflexible and could not be changed. Similarly there was a rule that if dental appointments were booked in company time then wages would be deducted for the amount of time absent. One case occurred where an employee was requested by management to transfer from his 2 pm to 10 pm shift to work a twelve hour shift from 6 am to 6 pm as a favour to help them out of a production problem. As a result his 10 am dental appointment was now in company time. Despite remonstrations, management refused to 'bend' the rule and insisted that wages would be deducted for the dental visit. When the representatives argued that this was unfair because the shift change was to suit managements interests, management simply replied by stating that the rules could not be broken.

Both of these issues were relatively minor and in both cases management could have conceded at little or no cost to the company. However, it appeared that management were attempting to establish the inflexibility of rules as a point of principle which could then be used later as a legitimising argument to preserve managerial authority. As Keith suggested in a later interview,

"Having set up these rules, which are agreed rules on both sides, you do really have to stick to them, because if you don't, it's like anything you start breaking down the rules and they cease to be rules".

Implicit in this statement is an argument about the legitimacy of rules. Keith repeatedly refers to the jointly agreed nature of some rules which gives them their legitimacy. He also argues that some rules gain their legitimacy from their consistency of application and their fairness.

"... in particular here it's a question of fairness. You have to be seen to be scrupulously fair and if you start making exceptions you start becoming unfair".

Despite their public insistence upon the inflexibility of rules, management often 'bent' their own, or jointly agreed, rules when it suited their purposes. If these transgressions went unnoticed or did not really affect the workforce materially then they did not surface at the Works Committee. There were, however, several instances of worker representatives raising cases of the managerial transgression of rules. Thus, as we have already seen, on two occasions the worker representatives pointed out that management had broken their own policy on the internal advertising of vacancies. On another occasion they exposed a management failure to follow their own dismissal procedure correctly. Finally, in the Works Committee meeting in March 1979 there was a clash over a management transgression of the rules regarding working hours and shift times. This paradox of the insistence on the sanctity of rules on the one hand and managerial transgression on the other hand was put to Dick Rumens.

Dick "I agree"

PK "It's a valid comment?"

Dick "(Laughs) It is valid"

PK "It seemed to me to be valid"

Dick "Well it is, that's a fact of life"

Rules played a major part in the process of social control within Bestobell Mobrey. Most nascent rules were passed through the Works Committee system for approval. However, rules only have efficiency to

the extent that they are legitimised. In Bestobell Mobrey many rules derived their legitimacy, other supporting arguments apart, from their origins in management hierarchy. Thus some rules are simply legitimised by managerial authority and prerogative. Since management are organised hierarchically it is reasonable for workers to assume that rules, policies and procedures which originate from the upper echelons have the requisite managerial authority and are thus legitimate and natural. In Bestobell Mobrey many of the issues which come before the Works Committee were in fact rules dictated by management and were not jointly agreed with the worker representatives but were imposed upon them. Examples would include the holiday issue, the moving of the Annual Review date and the Extended Leave Policy. In only one of these cases was managerial legitimacy seriously challenged.

Some rules, however, do gain their legitimacy from their jointly agreed origins. Indeed, the creation of the works committee system can be seen as a move towards joint regulation. Yet very little joint regulation on serious issues ever occurred in the Works Committee. Thus it may be suggested that in certain situations the move from unilateral to joint regulation may represent an increase rather than a decline in managerial authority and domination. We can therefore argue that the management at Bestobell Mobrey, and in particular Keith Mackney and Dick Rumens, pursued a deliberate policy of incorporation via the Works Committee system. By persuading the workforce that they were participating in the rule making process they were regaining control. We can now consider the evidence for this assertion.

Bestobell Mobrey had a very large number of joint management - employee committees for an organisation of its size. There were, of course, the two major committees, the Works Committee and the Staff Committee.

In addition, during the course of the research a Canteen Committee was created as a result of a proposal by Keith Mackney. This consisted of two works representatives, two staff representatives, two members of the Canteen staff and two members of management. Also in existence during the research study were the Job Evaluation Committee (see Minute 84) and the Suggestion Committee (see Minute 174).

Not only were there a large number of committees but their structure was tightly controlled by the management. For example, management controlled the size of the Works Committee. As we have already seen, on several occasions, and for different reasons, the worker representatives proposed increasing the number of negotiating members. This was always rejected totally by either Keith Mackney or Dick Rumens. Thus, Dick argued that,

"there is no way that we could have a negotiating committee or a body of people the size of this committee to negotiate".

As Keith argued,

".... normally a negotiating party is not more than two. It's quite often two. Two is certainly the number which I'm familiar with. But three is the optimum number ..."

Indeed this management position on the size of the negotiating membership was so strong and rehearsed that during one meeting it had humorous consequences. In the Works Committee meeting in April 1980, Ray, the consultative member for the Penn Works (a small ancillary production unit some miles from the Slough site), raised the problem of the general lack of involvement of workers at Penn in the consultative committee system. Jan Arends, (who had raised the question of an extra negotiating

representative for shift-workers) agreed with Ray and proposed that Ray be given an existing negotiating member as a direct contact in an effort to improve communications. Keith Mackney appeared completely to misunderstand the proposal because he launched immediately into his customary defence of the three man negotiation team. Dick was forced to interrupt and point out that an increase was not being suggested and that, indeed, the proposal was eminently sensible.

Secondly management controlled the composition of the committee and the roles of its members. It was Keith Mackney who had introduced the format of negotiating and consultative members in what was in essence a two tier committee. Peter Botell suggested that the reason for this change had been to disrupt the influence on the committee at that time enjoyed by Jan Arends and the Batchmatic operators. Keith Mackney was also in the habit of defining the roles to be played by the worker representatives. He used to remind the negotiating members that they represented the whole plant and not just a particular sectional interest. He would also take every available opportunity to outline the way in which he saw the system of consultation operating. Thus he repeatedly pointed out that the negotiating members should feed information back to the consultative members who should disseminate it to their respective workgroups. For example in one Works Committee meeting, Keith stated,

"...now what should be happening is what seems to be happening in some areas ... You should be feeding your representatives with what they should be saying to us. We then give them our replies and feed it back to you. And with that chain working, you can get the information out to the works at large, to the people you represent".

Similarly in the Committee meeting in May 1980 Keith took the opportunity of a health and safety issue to reiterate the powers and duties of members of the committee in their roles as health and safety representatives and to encourage them to make a positive contribution and thus ensure that the committee 'worked'.

One of the results of this managerial control of the Committee structure was a certain degree of confusion amongst the worker representatives. Several times they raised questions about the roles that they were supposed to be fulfilling. Perhaps the best illustrations and evidence of this confusion are provided by the following extracts from Works Committee minutes.

"The representatives felt their role had not been clearly defined and in fact they had been unable to negotiate changes which management had implemented during the last 12 months. The Personnel Manager said that it was his understanding that the Committee members present had negotiation rights on all items which came before the Committee and gave examples of items which had been resolved by negotiation".
(Minute 88 Negotiating Members)

"The Chairman said that the role of Consultative Members had been clearly established when the constitution for the new committee was established in 1977. The Consultative members drew the Chairman's attention to certain incidents which they felt had been dealt with by Management and the negotiating members without full consultation with the Consultative Members".
(Minute 116 Role of Consultative Members)

Another reflection of the desire of the management at Bestobell Mobrey to create the impression of joint regulation and participation in decision making was the use of ballots to decide minor issues. The following are some examples taken from the Works Committee minutes.

"The Assembly representatives proposed a change in the duration of the lunch break to facilitate early finishing on Fridays. It was decided that proposals would be put forward reflecting the various alternatives suggested by representatives and a ballot would be arranged at a future date. However, any change to working hours would need to be agreed by a substantial majority (75%) of the employees affected ..."

(Minute 57 Change of Working Hours)

"The representatives said that they were still concerned that they had not fully appreciated the holiday arrangements and proposed that a ballot of all employees be organised to establish employee acceptance

The Managing Director said that he understood that the Staff Committee would also wish for a ballot and he would discuss this with them at their next meeting. It was subsequently agreed at the Staff Committee to hold a ballot on the holiday arrangements".

(Minute 59 May Day Bank Holiday)

"The Chairman said that arrangements had not yet been made to ballot employees on a change in their hours, but this would be arranged in the near future".

(Minute 60 Change in Working Hours)

"The Chairman said that a ballot on the possibility of re-arranging working hours in all Production areas (including Penn works) would

shortly be arranged".

(Minute 86 Change of Hours)

It will be noted from these examples that ballots were generally confined to non-contentious issues such as preferences over holiday arrangements. For rule changes or issues where management desired a specific objective, ballots were not considered and other strategies were adopted.

Management appeared very concerned to demonstrate to the worker representatives that the committee system was taken seriously by them and was important. We have already seen how, in the case of Ivor's heating, Dick Rumens was quick to intervene and preserve the seriousness of the committee, even if no action was ever intended to be taken. Similarly in another Committee meeting the worker representatives raised the problem of the lack of first aid cover on the night shift and the associated safety implications. Keith Mackney immediately halted the meeting and from a telephone in the conference room contacted the ambulance centre and medical centre on the trading estate to ascertain their hours of operation. This apparent concern was not translated into action, however, and the shift was allowed to run on for two months without any first aid cover whereupon it was withdrawn. Finally in another meeting Peter Dormer, at the time a negotiating member, complained that he had arranged an interview with Geoff Reid to sort out a problem and had been kept waiting for hours and was ultimately never seen. He used this as an opportunity to argue that management were not taking the worker representatives or the committee itself seriously. This was quickly refuted by Keith Mackney and Dick Rumens who apologised for the incident.

Towards the end of the research study the above arguments were put to some of the managers involved in a series of extended interviews. When questioned about the plethora of committees, Keith Mackney responded,

"I think there was also the feeling that if you didn't give the sort of rights that they might have had if they'd had a trade union, then we would have had a trade union in the company ... Not that, in fact, having discussed it with Graham Woodhead, the Managing Director, there would be any objectives to having a trade union in the company. We are quite open about the fact that we don't care if we do or if we don't. Except that the workforce as a whole seem to be against union membership. And the fact that the recent campaigns by some of the trade unions have failed abysmally indicates that. And it was felt that if they haven't got a trade union then maybe they ought to at least have the facilities that they would have if they had one ... and so the thing is very much kept in house".

Thus, despite the hasty contradiction, it would appear that the Works Committee system is in part a defence against unionisation. If a company wishes to prevent union encroachment then it needs to provide both the substantive and procedural benefits that unionisation might bring for the workforce. Thus the Works Committee system can be seen as an attempt to provide a procedural channel for worker aspirations in that direction. On the substantive side Bestobell Mobrey also adopted a policy of paying terms and conditions above the national and local averages (although in terms of holidays this deteriorated during the period as we have seen). Keith Mackney was not the only manager to advance this view of the rationale behind the Works Committee. As Geoff Reid argued,

"For many years the people within the company have had a Works Committee set up and I don't think they've ever considered getting themselves organised from a union point of view".

This view was endorsed by Peter Botell who went on to suggest that the strategy would be successful in the future.

"... And I think that management will be able to keep the union out so long as it goes along with national agreements and keeps pace with salaries".

If this was the function of the Committee system as a whole, what were the purposes of the meetings themselves? Keith Mackney argued that when he first arrived the Works and Staff Committees,

"tended to be more consultative organisations rather than negotiating ones ... They had been set up for the free flow of information. It was a method of communication".

Geoff Reid described the system of Works Committee meetings as follows;

"Well I think to a large extent it's a very, very useful tool for communication. ... And of course, communication leads to consultation ... It gives people the opportunity to raise through their members all the little bits and pieces that probably they might not have the confidence to raise with their supervision".

Peter Botell suggested that the Works Committee system existed to provide "a communication medium between management and employees". Thus the management at Bestobell Mobrey involved in this area saw the system as being based upon communication and consultation. Keith Mackney was quick to point out that he had started the system of negotiating members on the works committee but this had not been

extended to the Staff Committee.

"We do talk salary packages to them ... and we do take notice of their comments ... but it is not in a negotiating way. It is in the role of a consultative committee. Whereas we actually negotiate to read a point with the Works Committee, we don't with the Staff Committee. We tell them, we listen to their feedback and maybe even adjust the final figure. But it's not a negotiating figure. They have no right to expect a joint approach on this".

The explanation offered for this difference in approach was the reluctance of staff to be 'bargained about'. Thus Keith argued that while the works were 'collective' in orientation the staff were 'individualist'.

Thus Bestobell Mobrey saw the Works Committee as comprising communication, consultation and some negotiation. But what form of consultation was it? Was it 'open' consultation on the one hand or 'pseudo-consultation' on the other? Peter Botell appeared to suggest that it was the latter when he argued that,

"It is consultation while hopefully steering them down the line you want".

Others including Geoff Reid and Dick Rumens agreed with that view. Dick argued that consultation did occur but significantly not on large issues. He also stated that if consultation is to be taken seriously it needs to be worked at by both sides. It is perhaps worth quoting Dick's arguments at some length.

"I mean we didn't consult them about going to Swindon (referring to the opening of a new production unit). You could argue that it was wrong not to do so. They would have a bigger role if ... I don't know which way round to put this one ... If both sides were to take it much more seriously. Say on things like productivity. I mean there are a whole lot of matters that should be discussed in it that don't get discussed in it. I mean, even when I took over they never used to publish any figures. I mean I regularly produced all the numbers because I think they ought to know what the numbers are. ... If you don't tell them the numbers they're not going to ask for them. If you tell them they might take an interest. Like anything else, unless you tell people things they're not going to ask; they're not motivated to ask".

From this it may be suggested that the consultation at Bestobell Mobrey was largely 'pseudo' consultation designed to create the impression that the views of the workforce were being taken into account. It can also be classified as being largely an information channel. Dick's description of the Works Committee can be easily juxtaposed with the views of Clegg and Dunkerley (1980). Discussing consultation and participation they suggest that,

"... what is lost by management hierarchically will be more than gained hegemonically to the extent that 'interest' is generally attached to the profitability of the enterprise". (1980: 516)

Thus Dick argues that at present 'real' consultation does not exist in Bestobell Mobrey. One move toward such consultation would involve the provision of more information for the worker representatives so that they could appreciate the 'true' picture. Thus, in conversation, Dick largely saw the role of the Works Committee as an 'educative' one.

What about the joint agreement argument so dear to Keith Mackney? I asked Dick to what extent the workers actually negotiated or participated in decision making through the mechanism of the Works Committee.

"I think there is some, but I think it is done on the basis of making them feel that they're participating. I think you know the result you want, you see."

Thus the Works Committee was seen as a body designed to gain agreement to management proposals or managerially imposed rules.

Management were also concerned about the type and level of issues being discussed by the Works Committee.

Keith "There was a lot of time spent in the earlier meetings when I first joined this company which really revolved around the classic tea and toilets syndrome ... I think the quality of debate has improved considerably (since then). I think that on the other hand the agenda has become shorter so that the items raised are ones which are generally more important".

Geoff Reid, on the other hand, was not so optimistic in his reading of the level of the issues.

"Most of the issues are important to the people who raise them but, in actual fact, in stature, they're fairly small".

The fact that the structure of the committee was not jointly agreed but was fairly tightly controlled by management was fed back to individual managers for comment. Keith Mackney agreed that this was the case, arguing that it was necessary to give stability to the system.

He summed up his position as follows;

"So, you know, management really have to take a lead in structures of this nature. And that's exactly what we have done".

Dick on the other hand suggested that the consitution of the committee could be changed if anyone came up with some ideas. I therefore put to him the idea of an extra negotiating member as previously suggested by the committee members. Dick was unable to accept this idea.

"No, well I wouldn't agree with that, I'd never agree with that".

In this more adamant line he was supported by Keith Mackney who stated that,

"unless there's good reason to change the structure I won't do it".

Indeed as Keith said later,

"We are telling them how to operate ... They look to us ... to stear them in the right direction".

For example management had steared them in the direction of a system of negotiating members and consultative members in an effort to reduce the power of Jan Arends and the Batchmatic operators. As Peter Botell stated,

"His ascendency has diminished as we've gone away from one type of committee member".

I suggested to Keith Mackney that he appeared to be very concerned both in actions and words to ensure the continuation and 'success' of the Works Committee system. His reply confirmed my interpretation.

"I'm totally, well in fact, the Management Team here generally are totally committed to this approach ... Really I think the main objective is to be seen to be on one side rather than to have two sides".

In order to ensure the success of the committee, Keith argued that it was important to get small problems resolved in order to give the worker representatives some 'credit' to take away from the meetings.

"There are certain items which came up and we think, "Oh God, yes" and we do it before the meeting. Which is probably not the best way of doing it but at least it's seen to be done and its something which the Works Committee can claim credit for, in that they have achieved something in that month".

Finally there appeared to be a reasonable consensus amongst the management regarding the lack of negotiating skill exhibited by the worker representatives. Peter Botell decribed them as follows;

"They don't know really the way to negotiate ... They have fair limitations in their ability to understand what we're saying and also in their ability to be able to put things forward clearly and concisely".

Keith Mackney agreed that their lack of skill often led to digressions which could be useful for management.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Attention can now be focused upon the objectives and possible achievements of this thesis. What, then, has emerged from the investigation of power processes within Bestobell Mobrey Limited? What new insights might have been generated regarding the operation of power? To what extent does the alternative model of power presented here enable a clearer understanding of the complex and interrelated processes of power within workplace industrial relations? An attempt can now be made to answer these questions by means of a summary of this work. In doing this the artificially separated strands of theory and field research data will be re-united.

It may be suggested that from the examination and analysis of the processes of power in Bestobell Mobrey and from the analysis of the lacunas and omissions in the existing literature has emerged an alternative model of power, which, although preliminary, offers several advantages and new insights. (See Figure 7.1). Firstly, it recognises that power exists in different forms at each of the different levels of social life. Power can, of course, be exercised to achieve individual objectives and goals but it also rests in the very structure of organisations. As we have already seen, previous theories and models of power tended to be concentrated upon only one facet of power. Some merely considered power in terms of behaviour and ability to use force or control resources. Others focused solely upon the power located within the structures of society (Cf Poulantzas 1969, 1973). Yet power does not have to be only one of these alternatives. Power does not exist solely on the level of action or on the level of structure. The model advanced in this work transcends this restrictive duality of action and structure which polarises the existing literature.

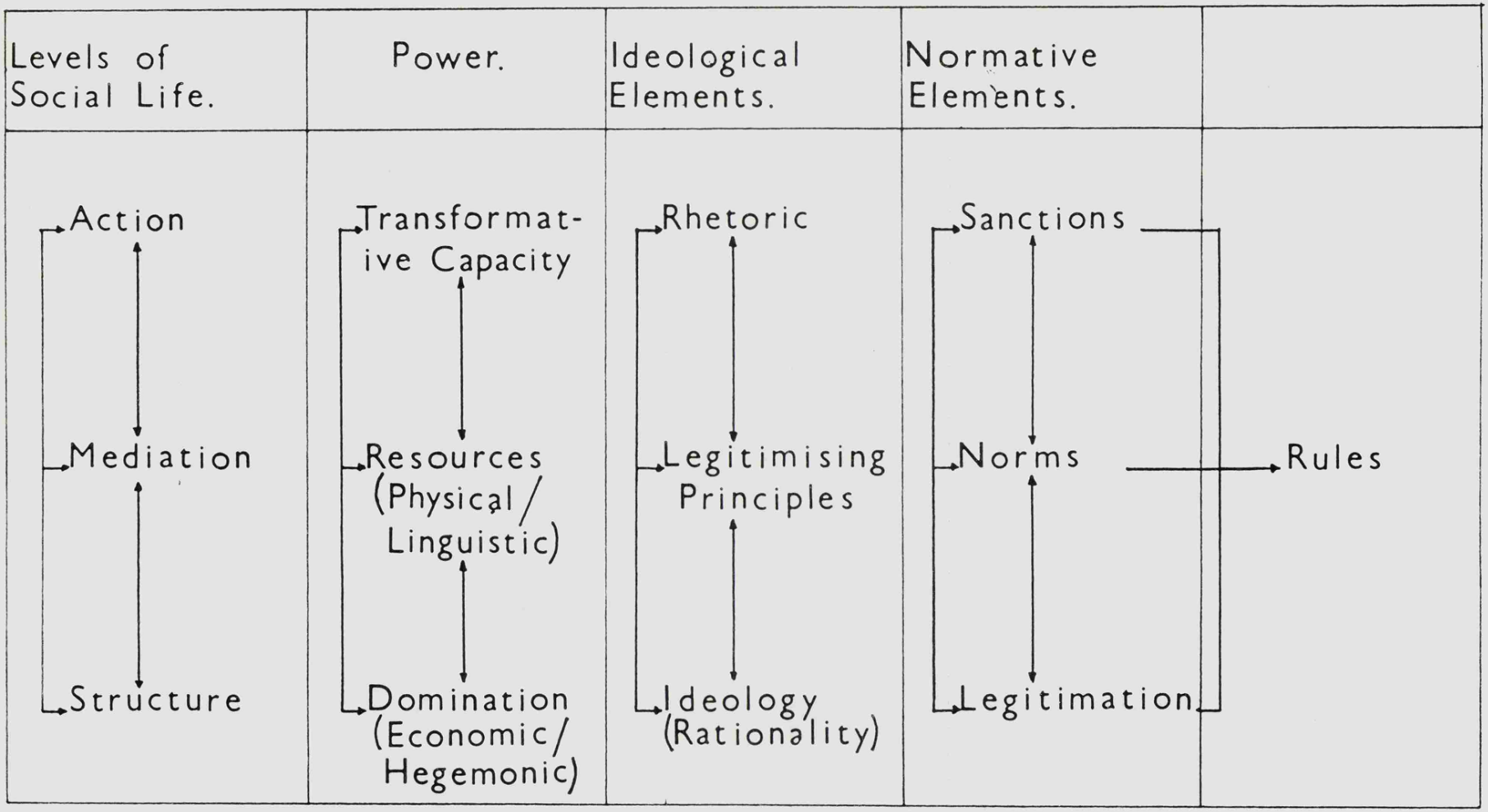


Figure 7·1 An Alternative Model of Power.

It enables the diverse theories of power to be encompassed within a single dynamic model. Power can be seen to operate at each level of social life; action, mediation and structure. Some typologies of power have, of course, focused upon the level of mediation. Such typologies classify power in relation to the 'resource base' which generated it. Yet such typologies fail to demonstrate the ways in which resource bases are mobilised and power exercised or explain the a priori distribution of the structure of resources. These defects are remedied in the alternative model of power presented in this thesis.

Secondly, the model draws attention to the ideological and normative elements of power. For example, it highlights the use of linguistic resources both as means of mobilising power and as forms of power in their own right. This thesis is, of course, centrally concerned with power in the field of industrial relations. In this context, the model enables the traditional static bargaining theory view of power as a product of physical resources, costs of disagreement, deprivations and sanctions to be linked to the more processual study of negotiation. The normative element of the model enables the relationship between rules, as the output of an industrial relations system, and power (a relationship tentatively, but rather vaguely, sketched by Dunlop 1958) to be more clearly expressed and understood.

Thirdly, the model demonstrates the centrality of power to the processes of social life and in particular to the process of social interaction. Fourthly, it suggests that what is immediately and directly observable is only one part of the power process and structure. As Clegg has remarked, the insights that the existing literature,

"can obtain are on the surface level of appearances, on power as manifested in the outcomes of particular exchanges". (1975: 54)

Such theories ignore the "'deep structure' of these appearances". (1975: 54). Finally it is hoped that the model enables the processual nature of power in organisations and the workplace to be more clearly examined and understood.

From direct observation of the Works Committee system; from interviews and conversations, from documentary evidence, and from analysis, it became apparent that Bestobell Mobrey management enjoyed a position of dominance over their workforce. In Giddens' terms, Bestobell Mobrey was characterised by an "asymmetry of resources" (1979: 93) with management occupying the favourable position. Domination can, of course, consist of economic subjugation or ideological hegemony. It has been suggested that management at Bestobell Mobrey were in a position of economic domination over the workforce. However, the economic dominance of a single management group in a specific workplace or organisation cannot be examined in isolation because it is, at least in part, a reflection of a more general system of domination existing in the economic system and the wider society. Thus Bestobell Mobrey cannot be divorced from the context of the environment which impinges directly upon it. As Benson has argued,

"People produce a social world which stands over them, constraining their actions. The production of social structure, then, occurs within a social structure". (1977b: 3)

The construction of economic domination within Bestobell Mobrey is not novel but is partly the reproduction of the existing social structure. Yet some theorists have attempted to analyse power within organisations without reference to the environment in which they operate.

An example would be the Strategic Contingencies theory. It may be suggested that this is a large theoretical omission. Indeed Benson has argued that the,

"conventional separation between organisation and environment must be critically examined. The essential continuity, the relational character of social life must be analysed and not overlooked in the search for analytical boundaries and units of analysis. The processes through which such conventional boundaries are produced and sustained must be pursued. The interests and power relations on which the conventional boundaries rest must be examined". (1977b: 9)

Thus the system of relationships between employer and employee in a specific instance cannot be divorced from the more general relationships between capital and labour as collectivities in the wider society. We have seen, from the radical and marxist perspectives, that this relationship between capital and labour is an antagonistic exchange relationship characterised by asymmetrical distribution of resources. This system of 'pure' economic domination is reflected in specific forms in individual firms and workplaces. It is manifested in terms of managerial style. Thus one could, to a certain extent, infer the existence of such domination from the presence of 'direct control' strategies or the use of unrestrained managerial prerogative. As we have seen from the research data, the management at Bestobell Mobrey frequently resorted to assertions of managerial prerogative in order to achieve their own objectives in relation to a particular issue. An example of this was provided by the managerial removal of a custom and practice holiday differential.

We have suggested that the Bestobell Mobrey management were also in a position of ideological domination over the workforce, created, in part, by the pursuance of hegemonic strategies. It was argued, for example, that both the emergence of formal rules and procedures and the creation and manipulation of a system of worker consultation and negotiation were evidence of, and manifestation of, this managerial hegemony. The first of these manifestations parallels Goldman and Van Houten's (1977) notion of the hegemony of bureaucratic procedure where rules and procedures are used as instruments of social control. The second manifestation can be seen as a superficial attempt to share power while in fact retaining, and perhaps even increasing, control. As Clegg and Dunkerley (1980) have clearly noted such systems are,

"clearly intended to change the surface structure of power relationsips between management and labour whilst leaving the underlying structure of social relationships and hegemony intact. Indeed, what is lost by management hierarchically will be more than gained hegemonically, to the extent that 'interest' is generally attached to the profitability of the enterprise". (1980: 516)

Again it has been widely suggested that the hegemony of a particular management, or group of managers, is inextricably linked to, and is in part a reflection of, the wider ideology or value system of the dominant class.

As we have already seen, domination consists of an asymmetry of resources which are located at the level of mediation. These resources are drawn upon and utilised to achieve 'transformative capacity' or the ability to intervene in a series of events so as to alter their course to one's own advantage.

At the same time such resources reinforce the structure of domination. It was also suggested that there were two types of resources; physical resources and linguistic resources. Given our initial assertion about managerial domination we would expect the management to enjoy a superiority of both types of resource. While this was indeed the case, it was noted that, in terms of physical resources or power bases, the workforce could have had significant power, yet these power bases were not utilised. Perhaps this is not surprising, given the asymmetry of ideological resources comprising the hegemony of management. This gave them the ability to control the issue 'agenda' and, perhaps more importantly, to shape the values and attitudes of the worker representatives in such a way as to prevent them considering the utilisation of their power bases. Thus the workforce and their representatives at Bestobell Mobrey were 'blinkered' and thus unable to identify alternatives to the present structure of power. As Brown has argued,

"Members of such organisations are limited to mundane experience as it is predefined largely by the official categories of that system ... In such systems the determinants of action are not freely accessible to the consciousness of the actors; they must act instead under intentions formed behind their backs". (1978: 372)

Similarly Golding has described how the structure of domination remains elusive to those subject to it.

"In the way that 'control' and those 'in control', remained elusive to 'K' (in Kafka's The Castle), so the structure of domination remains elusive to the employees of the Electrical Contracting Company". (1979:175)

In the case of Bestobell Mobrey it may be argued that, whilst the worker representatives were vaguely aware of the resource and power imbalance, they were unable to conceptualise, articulate or directly confront on a

sustained basis, this dominancy.

What, perhaps, characterised Bestobell Mobrey most of all was the way in which the utilisation of linguistic resources predominated. Both management and, to a lesser extent, worker representatives, used legitimising arguments and principles. As Armstrong et al have pointed out, in,

"any cultural setting there are certain acceptable motives for action (what we will call 'legitimising principles') which are, in turn, embedded in the characteristic world view (ideology) of that culture". (1981: 36)

The legitimising arguments and principles of management were generally powerful because they were derived from what might be termed the 'dominant value system'.(See Parkin 1972). Thus these legitimising arguments were based upon principles such as 'managerial prerogative' which is largely 'taken-for-granted' in industrial organisations. Obviously these managerial arguments and principles gained further effect due to the extent to which the 'dominant value system' was internalised by the worker representatives and the workforce. The worker representatives also, on occasion, employed fairly powerful legitimising arguments and principles to support their objectives in relation to an issue. However their arguments and principles also were drawn from the dominant value system or from what might be termed 'consensual norms or values'.

While legitimising arguments and principles are generally used as a resource to enable the exercise of transformative capacity, there is a sense in which they can be a substitute for power as transformative capacity. As Armstrong et al have argued,

"Considerations of legitimisation shape the issues on which power is deployed and the tactical deployment of legitimising arguments may also serve as a partial substitute for the exercise of power itself". (1981: 48)

Indeed it may be argued that the management at Bestobell Mobrey preferred to use legitimising arguments strategically rather than deploy their other power resources. This created the partial impression of a power balance while at the same time concealing the structure of domination.

At the level of action the exercise of transformative capacity was directly observed and recorded. As we have see the management 'won', or gained their objectives, on each of the major issues that were discussed in the Works Committee. This occurred even in issues where the balance of linguistic resources favoured the worker representatives. This imbalance of ability to exercise transformative capacity reflected the asymmetry of resources and the dominance of management. Managements superiority in transformative capacity was a function of several factors. Firstly, it can be explained by the degree to which the notion of 'managerial prerogative' had permeated the 'culture' of the organisation and the 'consciousness' of the workforce. Secondly, it was due to the superior negotiating skill exhibited by the members of the Works Committee, and to take the obverse to the inability of the worker representatives to translate legitimising arguments into a clear and coherent rhetoric. Finally, one also has to take into account the ability of management to manipulate the agenda as well as the divisions which existed within the worker ranks in terms of both interest and negotiating skill.

Having considered transformative capacity, resources and domination we can now turn our attention to the ideological elements of power. Following Golding (1979), one can argue that the principles of 'managerial prerogative' or 'sovereignty of management' have an important symbolic purpose in industrial organisations. Thus, as Giddens has argued, to examine the ideological aspects of such symbolic orders,

"... is to examine how structures of signification are mobilised to legitimate the sectional interests of hegemonic groups". (1979: 188).

As far as Bestobell Mobrey is concerned we have seen how one group of managers attempted (with great success) to inculcate an ideology by use of legitimising principles expressed in various rhetorics in order to legitimate their dominancy. Thus the relevant members of management shared a common ideology upon which rested a number of legitimising arguments and principles including notions of 'managerial prerogative', superior managerial competence, profitability and the need for efficiency. These arguments and principles were then articulated in the form of different rhetorics during the course of the Works Committee meetings observed. On these occasions, whereas the management exhibited a reasonable degree of proficiency in articulating their principles, the worker representatives, in many instances failed to translate their legitimising arguments into a successful rhetoric. This is perhaps predictable given the inequality of ideological resources available to the two sides. As Armstrong et al have pointed out,

"Whereas managerial ideology comprises a relatively coherent body of thought, comprehensively expressive of management interests, this is far from the case with the fragmentary counter - ideology available to

the workers. Whereas managers can justify their actions, at least to themselves and often to workers as well, by citing the principles of managerial prerogative and profitability, either of which will justify virtually any rule change, workers must ordinarily make use of legitimising principles which are relatively specific". (1981: 43)

It is important to note that almost all of the legitimising arguments or principles employed by the worker representatives at Bestobell Mobrey were either derived from elements of managerial ideology itself or from consensual principles such as precedent or consistency. For, as Armstrong et al have suggested, if,

"... managers continually justify their positions and action in such terms, it is not surprising that workers should eventually use them (in conjunction with their own conception of what is fair) for their own purposes". (1981: 101)

None of the legitimising arguments or principles employed by the worker representatives were built upon elements of a radical value system which would thus challenge the domination of management. Such 'resistance principles' would,

"... do rather more than set specific limits to the scope of managerial prerogative. In fact they (would) confront the assumptions and tenets of managerial ideology itself, quite systematically and over a wide range". (1981: 112)

Yet at Bestobell Mobrey such 'resistance principles' were conspicuous only by their absence. Thus we can tentatively suggest that the worker ideology at Bestobell Mobrey was too weak and too fragmented to provide the basis for its own legitimising principles and that this forced the

worker representatives to draw their arguments from elements of 'managerial' or 'common' value systems.

We have already seen how the worker representatives utilised consensual norms in order to reinforce their position on certain issues. This draws our attention to the normative elements of power. Both management and worker representatives attempted to translate legitimising principles into general norms of action and behaviour. Thus the Personnel Manager attempted to convince the worker representatives that no management would 'negotiate under duress' and that the maximum size of negotiating team that any management would deal with was three. The purpose of establishing such norms is that they legitimise the position or actions of a particular group. Thus norms are drawn from the existing order while at the same time re-producing it. The chief advantage of such norms lies in the extent to which they are 'removed' from elements of ideology. Thus legitimising arguments and principles are drawn from ideologies and then translated into norms which serve the purpose of legitimising the ideology which produced them.

In industrial organisations such norms are often raised to the status of 'rules', whether formal or informal. We have seen that the creation of rules and their use as a managerial defence was an important phenomenon within Bestobell Mobrey. It has been suggested that this use of rules formed part of the managerial strategy of incorporation and thus domination. Rules gain legitimacy not only from their content (derived from norms and ideological elements) but also from their origin. As Armstrong et al have pointed out,

"The legitimacy of 'formal' rules, supportive arguments apart, resides largely in their origin .... Since organisations generally reserve the

capacity to issue written rules to those fairly high in the hierarchy, the assumption that all written instructions have behind them the appropriate degree of managerial prerogative is natural". (1981:149-150)

Although, at the level of action, sanctions can be imposed to enforce norms or rules, this was generally not the case in Bestobell Mobrey. Management appeared able or willing to forsake sanctions and rely instead upon the 'ideological' and 'normative' weight of their arguments.

Any work needs to be reviewed in the context of its objectives and aims and in the light of the existing state of knowledge in the area. This thesis is no exception to that rule. The thesis represents an attempt by an industrial relations academic and practitioner to develop a clearer understanding of a concept which is the central core of that discipline. This objective was made more difficult because, on closer examination, power seemed, in fact, to be a major lacuna, taken for granted in the existing industrial relations literature. Such theories that did exist were fairly narrow in scope and offered only partial enlightenment. Yet the more general writings of some theorists in industrial relations, although few in number, did appear to provide potential for improved insights into power and avenues for further research.

Research into the literature of sociology, political science and organisational theory served perhaps rather to confuse than to elucidate. No single theory or model could be found to explain the many facets of power. Indeed, at times the existing literature was contradictory. These contradictions and alternative approaches were identified and discussed in Chapter 1. As a result of field research

and theoretical analysis an outline model of power was developed which appeared to resolve many of the problems associated with the existing literature. To the extent that this model provided new insights into power processes in the workplace it seemed to represent a small, but important, advance in industrial relations theory.

However it must be made clear that the model is preliminary and more work needs to be done in this area. The model could be developed and refined by further field research in the workplace and theoretical analysis. In particular, attention needs to be focused on several areas. Firstly, at some point, an attempt needs to be made to integrate and reunite the concept of power with the concept of consciousness. The latter was identified earlier in this thesis and represents the reactions of the power subject. Thus consciousness refers to the reactions and perceptions of subordinated or dominated individuals or groups in respect of their subordination or domination. This concept is, of course, related to Etzioni's second usage of compliance as 'the orientation of the subordinated actor to the power applied' (1961: 4) as well as to Marchington's notion of 'power realisation'. It is possible to suggest that this consciousness would consist of macro and micro components. At the macro level consciousness would refer to the perceptions of actors or groups to the structure of the wider society and, as such, would link close to the voluminous literature on 'class images' or 'images of society'. However, perhaps more important for our purposes in industrial relations would be the micro level of consciousness. This would refer to the reactions of the specific individuals and groups to the particular method of domination in their workplace and is similar to Beynon's (1973) notion of a 'factory consciousness'.

This focus on elements of consciousness would raise further ethical and epistemological questions and would perhaps lead the researcher into potentially explosive political arenas.

Should the researcher explain to management at the outset of his study exactly what he is seeking to examine? Should the workforce be made aware of the methods and processes of their domination? Should the researcher play a neutral or an active and committed role? On the epistemological side there is also the question of 'false consciousness'. To what extent is an observer's assessment of the 'real' interests of a workforce valid? These questions have been generated during the course of the present study and remain to be answered. They would become even more crucially important in any future study of power and consciousness.

Other areas that would benefit from further study include the relationship between the ideological aspects of power, especially the way in which rhetorics, used to articulate legitimising principles are derived from ideologies. Similarly attention could be focused on the links between rules, norms and ideologies. For despite the advances made and the increasing light that has been thrown upon the concept, the deeper recesses of power remain partly in the shadows.

Appendix A

The operationalisation of the Marchington model at Bestobell Mobrey

In the early phase of the research an attempt was made to utilise the Marchington model of workgroup power and apply it to the production department at Bestobell Mobrey. It will be recollected that Marchington argues that four major variables (workflow pervasiveness, workflow immediacy, substitutability and coping with uncertainty) can be used to measure the 'power capacity' of a workgroup. These variables can then be grouped into two separate factors. The first, Disruption, (workflow pervasiveness and immediacy) refers to the ability of a workgroup to halt production. This is seen as a measure of short term power capacity. The second Replaceability, (substitutability and coping with uncertainty) is related to the ability of the workgroup to increase indispensibility. This is taken as a measure of long term power capacity.

Workflow pervasiveness is measured by the number of links a workgroup has with other workgroups in the factory. Immediacy is obtained by an aggregation of inter-workgroup dependencies. Thus a positive figure indicates that a workgroup has X number of workgroups dependent upon it, whereas a negative figure indicates the reverse. Workgroup substitutability is measured by the time taken to find adequate replacements in the prevalent labour market conditions and to train such replacements to operational standards. Coping with uncertainty is judged subjectively after observation and discussion. The more a workgroup successfully copes with uncertainty, the more power it has.

Hickson et al, (1974), identified three coping mechanisms. First, there is coping by prevention (reducing the probability of the uncertainty)

which also removes most of the power potential for the group in question. Secondly, there is coping by information (working out probabilities of uncertainties) which may be thought of as routinisation. Finally, and this is the most potent, there is coping by absorption; in which the coping mechanism is internalised within the group; there is no possibility of routinisation.

As Marchington's model refers to workgroups, it was necessary to identify these within Bestobell Mobrey. Although the management did not normally consider the workforce in these terms and therefore detailed dis-aggregated statistics were hard to find, it was finally possible to identify 11 specific workgroups within the production area. These were as follows;

1. Goods Inward
2. Raw Materials Store
3. Machine Shop
4. Welding Shop
5. Specials
6. Toolroom
7. Maintenance
8. Inspection
9. Component Store
10. Assembly
11. Warehouse/Despatch

Marchington divided his four variables into two main factors. The first factor is the Disruption factor. This consists of pervasiveness and immediacy of workflow and is concerned with the power a workgroup derives from being able to halt production, from its position in the workflow alone. Table A.1 shows the Disruption factor for the workgroups at Bestobell Mobrey.

Table A.1 Disruption factor

No.	Department	Pervasiveness P	Dependency	Rank of DE	Length of time to total shutdown (weeks)	S*	Rank of S*
1	Goods Inward	10	N/A	N/A	8	0.34	8
2	Raw Material Store	5	+5	2	4	0.52	7
3	Machine Shop	6	0	5	1	0.75	1
4	Welding Shop	6	-2	7	1	0.75	1
5	Specials	9	-6	10	52+	0.09	11
6	Toolroom	7	+1	3	26	0.15	10
7	Maintenance	9	+6	1	20	0.17	9
8	Inspection	6	0	5	1	0.75	1
9	Component Stores	6	+1	3	1	0.75	1
10	Assembly	5	-2	7	1	0.75	1
11	Warehouse/Despatch	4	-3	9	1	0.75	1

Table A.2 Replaceability factor

No.	Department	Replacement time (weeks)	Training time	Degree of uncertainty	Coping Mechanism	Replaceability ranking
1	Goods Inward	6	14 weeks	Low	Information	10
2	Raw Material Store	6	14 weeks	Average	Information	7=
3	Machine Shop	52	3 years	Low	Prevention	4=
4	Welding Shop	52	3 years	Low	Prevention	4=
5	Specials	8	3 years	High	Absorption	2
6	Toolroom	52	4 years	Low	Prevention	3
7	Maintenance	26	4 years	High	Absorption	1
8	Inspection	4	3 years	Low	Information	6
9	Component Store	4	14 weeks	Average	Information	7=
10	Assembly	4	(up to) 1.5 years	Average	Information	9
11	Warehouse/Despatch	6	12 weeks	Low	Information	11

From the table, it can be seen that Goods Inwards, Specials and Maintenance all have high pervasiveness in terms of links with other workgroups but only maintenance has a strong positive dependency. Specials, in fact has the highest negative dependency relationship. If one turns to immediacy, another picture emerges. Specials, Toolroom, Maintenance and to a lesser extent Goods Inward, are all unable to close down the plant quickly by industrial action, whereas most of the other workgroups could accomplish this in approximately one week.

S* refers to a disruption factor related to the speed with which a workgroup could cause a total shutdown. It measures the 'progressiveness' of that effect. It is calculated as follows:

$$S^* = \text{disruption factor} = \sum_{n=1}^{n=j} \frac{\%\ \text{stopped in week } j}{j}$$

Thus the Machine Shop, Welding shop, Inspection, Components Stores, Assembly and Warehouse/Despatch are the workgroups able to create the maximum disruption.

We can now move on to deal with Marchington's concept of replaceability, which deals with longer term power capacity. From Table A.2 we can see that Maintenance emerges as the least replaceable workgroup closely followed by Specials, Toolroom and the Machine and Welding shops. Taking the two tables together, we can see that there is no one workgroup that appears to be clearly the most powerful. Instead there are several workgroups which score highly on all but one index. These are Maintenance, Toolroom, Specials, Machine Shop and Welding Shop.

Several practical problems emerged when attempting to apply Marchington's model to Bestobell Mobrey. These were as follows:

a) The workers at Bestobell tended to act (or not to act) as a workforce rather than in workgroups. Thus the artificial creation of workgroups for analytical purposes and subsequent results lead away from rather than towards the true nature of power in Bestobell Mobrey.

b) The model takes no account of workgroup (sub-unit) size. It may be argued that the model is best suited to workforces where the workgroups are above a certain size (25+).

c) The final result showed little correlation with any indices of workgroup power, such as wage rates.

Appendix B

Bestobell Mobrey Limited : Industrial relations policies

BESTOBELL MOBREY LIMITED

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICIES

JANUARY 1976

BESTOBELL MOBREY LIMITED

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICIES

C O N T E N T S

JANUARY 1976

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICIES

SECTION 1 Contracts of Employment

The national system of industrial relations is supported by a structure of legislation which largely assumes contracts of employment are collectively determined by agreement between employers and trade unions.

The Company acknowledge the rights of employees in respect of trade union membership and activities. However, in the absence of formal relationships between trade union/s representing employees of the Company and management, the Company will provide facilities for discussion between employees or elected representatives of employees and management on matters of mutual interest and concern arising out of the various conditions of employment and operation of the Company.

In Bestobell Mobrey Limited, these discussions take place within the policies laid down for the operation of the Junior and Senior Staff and Works Committees, except where employees are employed in field activities, where special arrangements are made to ensure mutually satisfactory discussions take place between members of management and the employees concerned.

All changes which may take place in the conditions of employment will be following upon the wishes of both staff and management to change these conditions. The question of enforceability of the contracts of employment at law does not arise as the Company does not regard these conditions as legally binding as collective agreements. However, this in no way changes the liability upon the Company and the individual in respect of obligations defined in the terms and conditions of employment in which, for example, the employee undertakes to attend the place of work for pre-determined hours and the Company is duly committed to make appropriate payment for such work.

Conditions of employment, for employees of Bestobell Mobrey Limited are in part determined directly by the management of the Company after discussion with employees, and in part determined by the management of Bestobell Limited, and in all circumstances must comply with the various Acts of Parliament which may have bearing on employment with the Company*

*See SPECIAL NOTE : Government Legislation

Various Acts of Parliament lay down minimum terms and conditions of employment or other regulations affecting employment at the place of work, which for example, include the prohibition of discrimination in selection, remuneration and career development etc. on grounds of sex and race. As such legislation is subject to change, the Company's personnel Policies and Procedures will be revised to ensure that the Company operates within such legislation. Where it becomes necessary to review the contracts of employment, the details will be brought to the attention of Committees or otherwise notified to employees prior to the implementation of such changes.

The following policies are the responsibility of the management of Bestobell Limited and changes sought by employees are progressed by consultation through constituent companies. Changes in these conditions of employement, which may involve improvements, will require considerable consultation with other interested parties within the Group of Bestobell companies. Changes may be initiated by staff/management of a single company and the circumstances of that company may justify a policy peculiar to that company, however, it will be generally understood that changes on the following must be agreed by Bestobell Limited:

* Salary policies for Management and Senior Staff
* Life Assurance
* Bestobell Pension Scheme
* Company Sickness Benefit
* Redundancy Entitlements
* Holiday Entitlements
* Profit Sharing bonuses
* B.F.W.T.
* Long Service Benefits

DATE EFFECTIVE & ALTERATIONS

These terms and conditions of employment are effective as from the date of publication. Notice of further changes will be given in accordance with relevant State legislation.

All alterations of these terms and conditions of employment will be notified as follows:

(a) by posting on the special notice board in the Personnel Department : Slough

(b) by copies of amended documentation to Managers, Senior Supervision and Staff/Works Committee representatives.

(c) by issue to all newly engaged staff and other staff as appropriate.

SECTION 2 Role of Staff and Works Committees

The prime purpose of the Staff and Works Committees is to facilitate discussions between elected representatives of employees and members of management on matters of joint interest and concern arising out of employment within the Company, and in its general operations.

The Chairman of the Committee will normally be a Senior Manager of the Company, Secretary, the Personnel Manager or Officer. Items for discussion will be submitted to the Secretary, in writing, five working days before the date of the Meeting, together with, where practicable, a brief paper attached setting out the principal points relating to the item. Matters raised under any other business may be minuted at the discretion of the Chairman

The principal rule governing the contents of the Agenda of the Committees is laid down in the Grievance Procedure and an item will be accepted for discussion only if it can be shown that it could not have been dealt with effectively by a line manager or supervisor. The object of this rule is to ensure that any matter of potential dispute is dealt with expeditiously.

The Committee meetings will be held as necessary and with the Chairman's agreement. Non-scheduled meetings may be held to deal with matters of urgency or those which cannot be otherwise dealt with during the time provided for scheduled meetings.

Scheduled Meetings will be as follows:

Junior and Senior Staff	:	Monthly (Excl. August)
Works Staff	:	Monthly (Excl. August)

Section 3 Role of Committee Members (Employee Representatives)

The members of the Committee will be elected annually and represent specified staff categories for specified geographical areas of the Works and Offices.

It is required that each member shall be nominated and seconded on a Company notice board, and in the event of an election, the candidate with the highest number of votes in a secret ballot, with scrutineers appointed, shall be declared elected. All candidates for election, who must be full time workers, should have a minimum of six months' service with the Company and will work in the area, or one of the areas, for which he is the candidate.

The elected members will act as representatives on the Committees and where circumstances make this necessary may have the opportunity to meet, as a group, for matters of concern to a particular committee; facilities for such meetings must be sought through the Chairman or Secretary. As individuals, elected Committee members will be available in working hours and without loss of pay, to assist another individual employed within his area of responsibility to make representations to a member of management and raise matters of concern to employees as a work group subject to the over-riding need to conform with the Grievance Procedure.

An elected member wishing to resign from the Committee before his term of office is concluded, is expected to put his resignation, in writing, to the Chairman. On confirmation of the resignation the Secretary will arrange for the election of another member as soon as practicable.

Management members are nominated by the Managing Director with the sole objective of giving the work of the Committees the maximum possible significance and to ensure that the discussions are meaningful and of mutual value. Such members may not be permanent and may change as is necessary.

Section 4 Grievance Procedure

A grievance may be the concern of one employee or many; it may arise out of the terms and conditions of employment or the general circumstances of the employment and may include employment security, welfare and safety.

The procedure for discussing changes in, or interpretation of, conditions of employment and related employment matters is based upon the line authority of management, together with discussions held with Committee representatives or general meetings of employees as are appropriate.

The formal procedure for the resolving of grievances is as follows, but it should be known to all concerned that staff of Personnel Department are available at any time to counsel and advise employees:

(i) An employee considering that he has a grievance will first raise this with his supervisor, who will make every effort to resolve the matter. In departments where staff report direct to a manager stage (ii) will become the first stage in the procedure.

(ii) In the event that the grievance is not resolved by the Supervisor, the Departmental Manager shall be informed by the Supervisor who will make arrangements for the Departmental Manager to discuss the grievance with the employee/s concerned. If the circumstances justify this and it is the wish of the employee and /or the manager, the Personnel Manager/ Officer and a fellow employee, or a Committee Representative, may be party to the discussion which takes place.

(iii) In the event of the grievance not being resolved at this stage, the Departmental Manager will arrange for the employee to have a personal interview with the appropriate Senior Executive or arrange for the matter to be discussed at the appropriate employee representative Committee meeting.

(iv) In the event of the matter being unresolved by the senior executive or at the Committee stage, the employee may see the Managing Director.

If the circumstances justify this, and the employee/s so wish, the Personnel Manager will make arrangements for the employee/s to obtain guidance from an Official of the Department of Employemt or Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service on matters arising out of the Conditions of Employment or other circumstances which may be effected by State legislation on the Company's employment policies.

Section 5 Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

POLICY

It is anticipated that employees will abide by standards of conduct or behaviour based on Company policy as stated in the conditions of employment and general industrial practice which is accepted as being reasonable.

The following are examples of infringements of acceptable conduct which may require disciplinary action:

(a) Theft

(b) Dishonesty, e.g. falsification of Expense Voucher, Salary Time Statement, Clock Cards or other necessary work records.

(c) Chronic absenteeism, or lateness without notice or reasonable excuse.

(d) Disorderly conduct

(e) Insubordination

(f) Gambling on Company premises

(g) Malicious or careless destruction of Company property

(h) Being incapable of carrying out normal duties for reasons other than illness

(i) Unsuitable conduct when representing the Company

(j) Posting and distributing notices, cards etc. without permission.

(k) Consistently poor performance or bad workmanship

If discipline falls down an employee must be given an opportunity to mend his ways, but incases of serious misconduct such as theft, dishonesty, gross insubordination etc. dismissal without notice can take place. In all disciplinary cases, other than verbal reprimand, advice must be sought from the Personnel Department. If the individual to be reprimanded is an immediate subordinate the Manager's superior should be told if possible before such action is taken and in cases of dismissal the Managing Director's approval must be obtained.

On all occasions of disciplinary action and dismissal, the manager concerned will encourage the employee to discuss the matter with the managers' own superior, particularly if he/she is an immediate subordinate.

The Company is aware of the impact that dismissal may have upon the circumstances of the individual employee and in each case where dismissal is considered the manager concerned will obtain from the Personnel Manager an assessment of the implications such a decision may have for both the individual and the Company.

PROCEDURE

(i) The manager or supervisor issues a verbal reprimand to an employee. This is a warning or can take the form of counselling the employee in an effort to correct the problem, and the employee's co-operation should be sought. Verbal reprimand should always be given in private and not within the hearing of others.

(ii) If, subsequent to a verbal reprimand, further disciplinary action is required a second reprimand should be given to the employee. Details of the reprimand and the circumstances, e.g. nature of the offence and specific action required to remedy the situation, should be sent to the Personnel Department for filing on the employee's personal dossier. He/she should be informed of this record.

(iii) In the event that previous counselling and warnings have failed a formal written warning should be given. This will normally be by a confirmatory letter sent from the Personnel Department to the employee's home address or handed to him personally.

(iv) It is permissible for a Manager responsible to suspend an employee pending investigation and in these circumstances the employee will be paid until the matter is resolved. If the misconduct is serious enough dismissal may take place at stage (iii).

SECTION 6 Health & Safety

The Health & Safety Act, 1974, requires a formal statement of Company policy. In implementing the provisions of this Act for the health and safety of employees and benefit of the Company, each manager is required to concern himself with safe working conditions in the area of his responsibility. Elected members of both Joint Staff and Works Committees will be both authorised and expected to raise matters of health and safety which may be relevant to the interest of their colleagues in the work area/s for which they have representative responsibilities, this shall be through the Grievance Procedure. In the absence of employee representatives, individual employees will be encouraged to identify and raise questions of health and safety through their Supervisor or Departmental Manager.

B.M.L. STATEMENT OF HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

"It is Company policy as an employer to provide a safe and healthy place of work, and general working environment for all its employees.

"The Management will take all steps within its authority paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:

(i) Plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe.

(ii) Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.

(iii) Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work.

(iv) A safe place of work and safe access to it.

(v) A healthy working environment

(vi) Adequate welfare facilities

"No safety policy is likely to be successful unless it actually involves all employees and the Company reminds employees of their own duties under Section 7 of the Health and Safety Act to take care of their own safety and that of other employees and to co-operate with the Company so as to enable it to carry out its own responsibilities successfully.

"The Company will welcome in particular, the co-operation of elected employee representatives in the implementation of not only the Company policy, but also the rules and regulations of State legislation relating to the health and safety of employees at work."

SECTION 7 Disclosure of Information

Management will endeavour to provide meaningful information to employee representatives which will assist them in making constructive comment or other observations to appropriate members of management when terms and conditions of employment are under review. Such information may include details of current pay structures, numbers of employees in respective job groups or status categories, labour stability and turnover rates, relevant statistical data from for example the Department of Employment Gazette and such other labour market data that management may have available and which is not subject to confidentiality agreement between the Company and other employers.

To assist employee representatives in making their contribution towards the creation and maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment, management will report not less than annually upon the Company's accident record. Where practicable will also invite employee representatives to study the lessons to be learned from such accidents with the object of creating the maximum possible awareness on the part of all employees of the need to follow safe working practices and procedures.

The Chairmen of Works, Staff Committees and adhoc consultative meetings with employees will take every reasonable opportunity to report upon matters which may be of interest to the employees concerned, for example, the Chairman of the Works Committee will review the performance of the Company with particular reference to production activities, since the last occasion of report and will provide the Committee with his assessment of future prospects. These will include work loading and related matters such as overtime working, employee job flexibility needs etc.

Matters of concern to employees throughout the Company will be dealt with by the Managing Director who, in addition to providing a written annual report of the Company's progress and prospects, will provide also a financial statement. He will, as appropriate, address employee representatives and answer such questions as may be necessary.

The disclosure of information about the Company's affairs as these concern employees is an on-going process which may be both formal and informal; will be communicated both in writing and by work of mouth. The purpose being to assist employees to develop a degree of awareness of the operation of the Company beyond that which arises from the carrying out of the individual employee's specific job duties.

SECTION 8 Redundancy

It is part of the Company's employment policy to provide stable conditions which promote job security. It is, however, necessary that the Company responds to economic circumstances beyond its control and as the responsibility of determining the size of the Company's work force rests with management, it is necessary that management determine the scale and distribution of any reduction in manning the business.

As far as is possible, or practicable, management will consult with representatives of employees in the implementatation of significant reductions in the work-force. It will seek to avoid redundancies by:

(i) Restrictions on recruitment

(ii) Reduction in overtime working

(iii) Retirement of employees who are beyond normal retirement date

(iv) Attrition, that is internal transfers including retraining where necessary to cover essential jobs made vacant by voluntary termination.

Consideration would be given to short-time working.

If redundancy becomes necessary, then the principle determinate in selecting the order of severance will be "first in last out". However, the over-riding consideration for management will be to successfully operate the Company's business and management will have to give priority to those employees whose contribution is essential to the Company's future interests.

Having regard to the above considerations, managers will select individuals for discharge on grounds of redundancy objectively, and with the detailed assistance from the Personnel Department. They will make recommendations to the Managing Director for his approval.

Where the numbers involved are 10 or more, the Managing Director will report the facts and circumsatnces to the Board of Directors and the Personnel Department will advise the management of the local office of the Employment Services Agency.

In cases of redundancy, the Personnel Department will take all possible steps to arrange transfer of individuals to other companies within the Group. The right to offer such employment is, however, within the authority of management of the sister Company as are also the specific and personal terms and conditions of employment. Where such transfers are arranged, the career interest of the individual will over-ride individual company job considerations and the time taken to arrange the transfer should not exceed the normal contractual period of notice.

Where redundancies inevitably result in severance of individuals, the terms will be not less than those laid down by relevant State legislation and may be subject to improvement dependent upon circumstances and will compare reasonably with current community practice.

SECTION 9 Government Legislation

The Conditions of Employment, Industrial Relations Policies and Personnel Policies & Procedures acknowledge the statutory obligations imposed on the Company and its employees by various Acts of Parliament. Any amendments or additions to contracts of employment necessary, arising from additional Parliamentary legislation will be acted upon as stated in Section 1 of this document. The following Acts of Parliament are taken particular note of in drawing up the conditions of employment, industrial realtions and other personnel employment policies.

Truck Acts 1831/1940

Disabled Persons Act 1944/1958

Education Acts 1944/1973

Terms and conditions of Employment 1959

Wages Council Act 1959

Payment of Wages Act 1960

Factories Act 1961

Shops & Offices Act 1963

Race Relations Act 1965/1968

Redundancy Payments Act 1965

Attachment of Earnings Act 1971

Equal Pay Act 1970

Contracts of Employment Act 1963/1972

Social Security Acts 1973/1975

Employment Training Act 1973 (Employment Service Agency Training Service Agency)

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Trade Union & Labour Relations Act 1974
(Note: also Code of Industrial Relations 1974)

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Employment Protection Act 1975

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

SPECIAL NOTE: Throughout all employment contracts, policy statements and procedures, the terms 'he' may be used for 'she' man for woman and male for female except where a distinction is necessary and in accordance with the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975.

Appendix C

Works Committee : Rules and procedures

WORKS COMMITTEE

RULES & PROCEDURES

1. Objectives

To provide a recognised and direct channel of communication between employees represented by the Committee and management on matters affecting their joint interests. To secure the maximum degree of co-operation for the prosecution of measures undertaken in the mutual interest of the employees and the Company by both representative negotiation and consultative practices.

2. Membership

The Committee shall consist of representatives of employees in both status groups and specified areas together with representatives of management. The Chairman and Secretary shall be appointed by the Managing Director.

3. Co-option

The Chairman may agree to the co-option of additional person/s for discussion of particular items on the Agenda.

4. Election of Employee Representatives

Members shall be elected annually for the year beginning April and ending March. The electoral areas shall be as follows:

Negotiating Members	Consultative Members
Skilled	Machine Shop & Toolroom
Semi-skilled	Assembly & Canteen
Chargehands	Welding & Maintenance
	Goods Rec'd, Component Stores, Warehouse & Despatch
	Inspection & 'D" Workshop

5. Election of Committee Members

The Secretary shall make all arrangements necessary for the election of members to the Committee, posting and collecting nomination sheets and distributing ballot forms through Works Supervision. The election shall be by ballot.

6. Eligibility for Office

All employees represented on the Committee shall be full-time adult (18+) and six month's service with the Company in order to be eligible for election.

7. Period of Office

The election shall be for a period of one year, retiring members shall be eligible for re-election.

8. Resignation

Elected Committee members may resign during their period of office. Resignation shall be submitted to the Chairman who will report to the Committee at the next scheduled meeting. Upon confirmation of the resignation, the Secretary will make arrangements for the nomination/election of a new member who will serve on the Committee for the balance of the electoral year.

9. Substitute Members

Upon election to the Committee, members will identify and advise the Secretary of the name of the substitute members who shall be invited to attend Committee meetings and otherwise act as representative for the area in the elected member's absence.

10. Changes of Electoral Areas

Elected areas may be changed by agreement of the Committee. Proposals for changes shall be given in one meeting for discussion and decision at the next schedule meeting.

11. Time and Dates of Meeting

(a) Scheduled meetings of the Committee shall be held on the second Tuesdayof each month (excluding August) or at such other time as may be determined by the Chairman.

(b) Unscheduled meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chairman. Elected members have the right to request such

meetings

12. Agenda

(a) Elected members may meeting on the first Wednesday of each month to discuss items put forward for the Agenda. The Secretary will advise elected members of management items in time for this meeting. The Secretary will be informed of the items elected members wish to have placed on the Agenda in time for this to be formally circulated to Committee members and published on main notice boards three working days before the date fixed for the meeting of the Works Committee.

(b) New items on the Agenda shall be accompanied by an explanation of the principle points at issue in order to ensure prompt attention and any necessary action.

(c) No item shall be introduced for discussion at the Works Committee which could be effectively dealt with by the Supervisor or first line management. Where such matters have not been dealt with to the satisfaction of either or both parties, the matter may be discussed in the Committee, where necessary reference will be made to the Employee Grievance Procedure to determine the appropriateness of discussion of an individual or employee group grievance at Works Committee.

13. Scope of Committee Discussions

There are no formal restrictions placed upon matters which may be discussed in the Committee and dealt with in Company Industrial Relations procedures. However, employee members elected on a status group basis will deal with matters requiring the representative negotiator role, that is, will speak principally on those matters that are required to be published under the Contracts of Employment Act., Rates of pay including job structure, hours of work, overtime and shift premiums and annual holidays, or such matters which affect the security of employment of individuals or groups of employees and may be dealt with under the provisions of the Employment Protection Act or Redundancy Payments Act.

Other items which may be discussed in Committee are likely to be regarded as essentially consultative, either because they are conditions of employment common to all U.K. BESTOBELL companies or because they deal with on-going matters of management which are of concern to employees, e.g. production, finance reports and physical circumstances of the work place involving such as Health and Safety. The consultative member being elected on an area basis can be most effective in this essentially communications role. The area consultative member will also be expected to give support to negotiating members in matters of mutual concern and, as witnesses to Committee negotiations, will be well placed to assist the principal spokesman in reporting back to employees at the work place.

14. Minutes

The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of all formal meetings. The minutes will also be subject to approval by the Chairman. The minutes will be circulated to elected members 24 hours before posting on NOtice Boards and within five days of the holding of the meeting. During this time elected members are required to advise the Secretary of their disagreement of the accuracy of the minutes. The minutes of the meeting will be subject to formal approval at the beginning of subsequent scheduled meetings.

15. Communication of matters discussed at the Meetings of the Committee

The minutes of the meeting shall be authorised statements of discussion in the Works Committee. Where matters discussed are of a potentially contraversial nature, the Chairman shall ensure agreement on a statement which shall be made to employees either on a special notice or within the general minutes of the meeting.

16. Changes in Rules of Procedures

There shall be no change in the rules of procedures without formal notice at one meeting for discussion and determination at the next scheduled meeting.

S:SMP/MRJ

Appendix D

The Shiftworker representative issue: Agenda Meeting 9.3.1979

SPEAKER	Text
304	
Jan	Well there is a small one here - some people are approaching me asking for a negotiating member for shiftworkers (Pause)
Bill	Well the negotiating members cover all grades - don't they.
Jan	Yeah but they want one special for shiftworkers because they reckon they don't get their fair deal.
Tony	In what way?
Jan	I don't know.
	(Confused several voices)
Jan	Well they reckon there should be one up there for shiftworkers - just to put their point of view.
Tony	Well in that case they must feel they've been neglected - and
310	if they have in what way?
Jan	Well first of all - we - the Batchmatics - never had a square deal last year - didn't they - not off the committee.
Bill	You didn't?
Jan	No
Tony	Last year? 1977 you mean.
Jan	The year before that.

Bill 1977 .... 1977 was when the three negotiating members and the committee was first formed - in October 1977.

Jan Em 1977 - well

Bill 1977 that was when it was formed.

Tony No 1978 wasn't it? (several talking at once)

Bill Last year was '78 ..... 1977 was when we first formed the committee - it was first decided to form this committee .... (Jan talking in background) .... and last year the batchmatic, er .... the shiftworkers were as equally represented upstairs on the discussions as the dayworkers - more so than the dayworkers - 'cos the shiftworkers got more than the dayworkers out of it over the years production - over the years run .... no one fell down on regrading or re-classification - no none fell down on the benefits anybody else got - the 12½% that was originally offered by the management for your shifts holiday premium and the word of mouth at the time was said that we would reinstate it - reinstate 25% the following year was enforced and brought up by the people who represented the shiftworkers last year and it was obtained - that with effect from January 1st this year they would get their 25% - Personally speaking I can't see where the shiftworkers have lost out at all!

Jan Well ....

Bill In fact they've come off better than the day workers.

Jan But .....

Bill Only through the people what does the negotiating - they took part in it - management offered it and the people on the negotiating team held them to the offer - and no shiftworkers really lost out on grading last year.

Jan I didn't say we lost out on grading .....
340

Bill Well - then what else could you lose out on ......

Tony We've never refused to take up a shiftworkers or anybody elses ......

Jan Well you've said ......

Tony .... they come to us and they say I've got a problem ......

Jan ..... on the other hand you have said many times to me that you're getting fed up with it.

Tony With what?

Jan Well with our problem - with our problem.

Tony Ah! You're talking about your problem.

Jan Oh yeah I talking .....

Tony No Jan, you introduced this as shiftworkers ......

Jan Oh yeah - but it is - it is introduced as shiftworkers ......

Tony But now you're saying that its your problem?

Jan No I'm just giving an example of my problem (unclear) ... If I'd had a shiftworker representative I could have gone to him couldn't I?

Tony Yeah - wait a minute no.

Ivor But didn't they .....

350

Tony Hang on, hang on Ivor - let me answer it, let me answer it - Now the last time you went up there to see Geoff Reid I came up there with you - we sat up there and we discussed it and at the end of the discussion I turned to you and Tony and I asked you, Are you happy? - are you satisfied? - and you both said yes.

Jan In what way .....

Tony (Unclear)

Jan ..... You said to us, well this is the last time you'd ever do it.

Tony Do what?

Jan Coming up with us .....

Tony Oh no - no.

Jan Oh yes you did.

Tony Oh no no no no.

Jan Oh yes I can get Tony up on that.

Tony Oh no.

Jan Oh yes you did.

Tony If you've got a problem I'll go up there with you - but if its going to be the same old thing - you don't understand your job spec - I mean, how you can say .....

(Babble of voices all at once)

This is one of the things that you said - that you, you were unsure about your job spec - you didn't understand it - you were unsure about it.

Jan I wasn't - I was sure about my job spec - I didn't call the meetings - the company called the meetings - not me - I only - I was only called in twice .....

Tony I never refused to go anywhere with anyone - I've never refused

367/8 - I never to anybody I'm not interested, I'm not going to listen to what you've got to say - I'm not going to take your case up.

Discussion deviates to the Role of Negotiating Member Issue.

483

Tony Well you know - this thing about shiftworkers not being you know - well you know - its a bloody laugh cos we worked hard on it.

Jan Ours is a big group - I suppose theres 30 people.

Bill It's not as big as the day workers - in the machine shop - in the machine shop.

Jan 30 is a big group.

Bill Not as big as the day workers in the machine shop.

490

Discussion sidetracks to numbers of workers.

510

Tony Believe you me - we had to work bloody hard and in fact I'm sure that some people round this table will bear me out now that when I first brought this before the meeting I was shouted down more times .....

(General talking)

- the very first time - the very first time that the shift premium was mentioned.

Jan I'm not on about that at all but .....

Tony I argued against the whole committee and I know its water under the bridge now but as its been brought out - I'd argue against most of the committee - and it went on for a long time - we had to work hard and gradually it came around - we got the first half - I know that there are some shift workers, in fact I remember Charlie S. saying to me - 'ow that doesn't count, we were going to get that anyway - (quietly) we bloody weren't ..... the management have these things and they're prepared to give them to you - yeah if you're prepared to fight for them ..... (general talking) and if you can't put forward a convincing argument you won't get it it's as simple as that.

Ivor Yeah it was coming up month after month Jan - this shift premium.

Jan I don't doubt it but .....

(confused)

Jan They promised

Tony Oh yeah they'll promise all kinds of things - you know better than that.

Ron They seemed to be under the impression they hadn't promised it - that was the impression I got - they hadn't.

Bill Whether it was promised or not - there's a lot of things that have been promised verbally that hasn't been materialised.

Ron I believe - I wasn't at that meeting myself - I wasn't on
529 the committee but I remember somebody saying .....

Drifts off the point

602
Ron Anyway this other business about the shiftworkers representatives - is there strong feeling on the shop floor among .....

Jan I do not know ... I do not know - I haven't been round - I didn't make it an issue - I didn't go round - I presume that if you went round you could find .... (unclear) .... I assume - I don't know.

(unclear)

I haven't been round at all - I reckon most probably there would have been .....

Bill That's only an assumption Jan because .....

Jan No (unclear) .....

Bill ..... I dealt - I dealt quite a lot with the shift workers and I deal quite a lot with the 4A's and under and there's quite a number in that group - (pause) - and I've had no personal complaint.

Jan Well we've never said about complaint.

Bill No - well if there's dissent then ... if there's dissent ... if there's dissent ... wherever there's dissent there's complaint - you can't have dissent without complaint.
(Jan mumbles in background)
There must be causes for dissent and the reason for dissent is generally a complaint.

Jan Well if you put it that way I er, I er I haven't heard anything that said that, well because so and so we want a shiftworker - they just said that we want a shiftworker because our, our views weren't being represented .....

Bill But .....

Jan And if that is general, I don't know .....
(Several people interject - Bill Ivor and Jan again)

Bill Numbers not names, numbers of people who have approached you in this line

Jan .... three or four .....

Bill No, three or four out of how many?

Jan Thirty, thirty something - I don't know as there's a general feeling I .....

Bill I mean you can have one bloke having a gripe - I mean something for ever and ever - (unclear) - (Jan interjects) - would want a personal representative from shiftworkers and .....

Jan ..... (unclear) Bill, there's no question, I mean, it all depends how strong the shiftworkers feel and that you could soon find out.

Appendix E

The 1979 Wage Review

i) Minute 145, 17.10.1978 - Worker representatives enquired if management had any proposals for the 1979 Wage Review.

Personnel Manager replied that due to the confused position regarding pay policy he had not.

Representatives suggested that because of the recent requests from management for flexibility, they would wish to discuss an individual flexibility agreement.

Personnel Manager invited the worker representatives views on the present wage structure before the next meeting.

ii) Minute 149, 16.11.1979 - Worker representatives had put forward proposals, including one for the creation of a sixth grade.

Personnel Manager said that management was examining both these and their own proposals.

Chairman confirmed that payments will date from Monday 1.1.1979.

iii) Minute 156 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 149) Special Meeting 12.12.78
The Personnel Manager apologised for the delay in replying to the representatives' proposals for changes in the present grade/ wage structure for 1979. The delay had been caused by the uncertain state of industrial settlements nationwide, particularly the outcome of the Ford dispute and the possible Government reaction to this settlement. Also the proposals put forward by representatives had resulted in management carrying out a complete reappraisal of the job evaluation scheme and investigation of different suggestions from management.

iii) The reply from management was to put forward a scheme based on the existing job/wages structure which it was hoped would assist in communicating to employees the changes proposed. The Personnel Manager proposed that there would be an upward movement of grade letters and number to facilitate the introduction of a grade 6, but no upward change in cash values except where there was a need for a rounding up.

Some groups or jobs would in some circumstances not move up into the next grade but remain in the "a" grade to ensure that existing differentials were maintained. These would be more clearly defined when management were in a position to finalise the criteria to facilitate movement within the new structure. The Company offered employees an increase of 5.5% on basic rates, which was slightly above the Government guidelines and confirmed that the productivity scheme and attendance bonus would continue providing it remained self-financing. These schemes could still not be guaranteed and would need to be reviewed at four monthly intervals.

The Personnel Manager continued that management had considerable difficulties in establishing a system of flexibility which would be self-financing. It had been custom and practice for many years that employees should be flexible and this would appear in the new criteria and the criteria would allow for a controlled wage drift.

Representatives said that employees had in the past been prepared to be flexible in periods of power failure or machine breakdowns, but not due to high work load, in particular areas. The Personnel Manager replied that management expected that employees would be flexible where the well-being of the Company was at stake.

iii) The Meeting adjourned at 4.15 p.m. for representatives to consider management's proposals.

iv) Minute 157 1979 Works Wage Review (Ex Min. 156)
Special Meeting 14.12.1978
Representatives said that they had met with the full Committee and a joint decision had been made to reject management's proposals concerning the new grading structure.

Representatives proposed that a grade 6 should be added to the existing structure with additional rates of pay, that all jobs in grade 5 and grade 4a Capstan Setter/Operator to be regraded to re-establish differentials prior to Government's intervention in the annual wage review. Representatives also proposed that the 6.9% productivity scheme be consolidated immediately onto the basic rate and that they would seek an increase of 10% on the newly consolidated rate. The representatives concluded their proposals by saying that it was the opinion of all Committee members that the 6.9% productivity scheme was a means by which the Company seeked to restore the Company's rates of pay to a more favourable position compared to local industry and they were not prepared to take this settlement into account when determining the annual review.

The Personnel Manager said that the national pay rounds were still in a state of flux following the Government's defeat on sanctions, but the rules still applied and any productivity scheme must continue to be self-financing and be kept under constant review. The 6.9% productivity scheme and the attendance bonus had put the Company considerably ahead of the majority

iv) of local industry, but could not be considered as totally separate from the 1979 wage review.

The Personnel Manager continued that management felt that grade 6 had been created and differentials increased as fitter/assemblers would remain in grade 4 and certain employees in welding and machine shops would be able to drift into grade 5. Management would wish to consider representatives proposals which may result in a need for different criteria for jobs in grade 5 and 6 compared to those in other grades.

The Meeting adjourned at 10.30 a.m. for management to consider representatives proposals.

v) Minute 158 1979 Wage Review (Ex. Min 157)

Special Meeeting 15.12.1978

The Personnel Manager said that management had considered representatives proposals for a new grade/wage structure, consolidation of the 6.9% productivity scheme, an overall increase of 10% on the new consolidated base rate and that differentials should be more clearly defined including an upward movement for all employees in grade 5.

The Personnel Manager explained that mangement would have to reject representatives' claim for 10% increase in basic rates as this was considerably beyond the guidelines and the 6.9% productivity scheme could not be consolidated as the rules required the scheme to be self-financing and, therefore, continually monitored on a four month basis.

v) Management were willing to accept representatives agreements for retaining the present structure and adding a grade 6 to the structure. Management were also willing to include the 6.9% productivity payment when calculating the new increases, which would yield slightly over 5% and the movement of some employees from 4a to 5c with a subsequent movement of some employees already in grade 5. Staff manual increases were in order with hourly paid employees to ensure that differentials were maintained.

Representatives received copies of the new wage structure and criteria (see attached). They replied that their proposals had been for all employees in grade 5 and 4a other than assembly employees to be up-graded and would wish to seek this agreement.

The meeting adjourned at 4.10 p.m. for representatives to consider managements proposals.

vi) Minute 159 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 158)

Special Meeting 20.12.1978

Representatives said that they had discussed managements proposals with the full Works Committee and were unable to recommend acceptance. In reply to the proposals, they wished to confirm that they were seeking an upgrading for all 4a employees in the Machine Shop not just Capstan Setter/Operators and a subsequent upgrading for all employees in grade 5 other than Senior Inspectors who would remain at grade 5c. The representatives continued that they rejected totally the new criteria for assessing individuals' ability and wished to retain the existing criteria. They proposed that management should examine a 5%

vi) flexibility payment in addition to the existing productivity scheme which would run concurrently with the present productivity scheme and continue for as long as the productivity scheme was self-financing.

The representatives explained that whilst they also represented the Inspectors they felt that there was a need to re-establish differentials between them and machine shop personnel and they had to represent the majority view. The representatives also suggested that management should examine the possibility of a separate representation for the Inspection Department.

The Personnel Manager replied that a request for a 5% flexibility arrangement was a substantial figure which would have to be self-financing, and that management would require time to examine representatives new proposals.

The Meeting adjourned at 10.15 a.m. for management to examine representatives proposals.

vii) Minute 160 Wage Review (Ex Min. 159)
Special Meeting 4.1.1979

The Personnel Manager said that at the last meeting, there appeared to be a fair degree of agreement concerning the Manual structure with the addition of Grade 6. There were, however, four major points made by representatives, that all Machine Shop employees on Grade 4a should move to 5c, that the Inspectors in Grade 5 should not move up a step, rejection of the proposed criteria and a proposal for a 5% flexibility payment to all employees.

vii) The company had offered increases averaging over 6% with none under 5% and some as much as 9%. If employees were to take into account increases since January 1978, plus the Company's latest offer, pay had increased by between 20.5% (£10.50) and 26% (£16.84) per week. This was considerably ahead of inflation, the rise in the Retail Prices Index and nationally reported agreements.

The Personnel Manager said that there was a limit to how much the Company could afford or justify and to offer a flexibility scheme would be contrary to past co-operation, also some groups of employees already received additional payment for flexibility. The Personnel Manager proposed the introduction of revised criteria and a salary structure which had been slightly improved for the lower grades. Management were also prepared to agree that all employees on Grade 4a in the Machine Shop should move to G.5c with all other employees in Grade 5 moving up by one step including Inspectors with any anomolies being the subject of separate talks.

Representatives replied that they could not accept that Inspectors should move above Grade 5c and felt that if this did happen, there would be considerable resistence from other employees. Representatives also felt that there had been problems in the latter part of 1978 and employees were reluctant to be as flexible as required during this period without some form of compensation.

The Personnel Manager said that he was preparing to re-examine the Inspector position in the light of representatives' views.

vii) The meeting adjourned at 4.15 p.m. for representatives to consider management's proposals.

viii) Minute 161 Wage Review (Ex Min. 160)

Special Meeting 5.1.1979

The representatives said that they had met with the full Committee and were unable to accept the criteria in its present form. They were also concerned that the problem regarding Inspectors had also remained unresolved.

The Personnel Manager replied that management were prepared to accept representatives proposals regarding changes in the criteria, but could not accept representatives proposals not to uplift Senior Inspectors.

It was agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 5.30 p.m. and that representatives would report management's proposals to employees at Mass Meetings on Monday, 8th January, 1979.

ix) Minute 162 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 161)

Special Meeting 8.1.1979

Representatives said that employees had decided to reject management's offer and that sanctions would be taken by employees. It had been decided that all employees in the Machine Shop, Welding Shop and Inspection would strike for one day, Wednesday 10th January, and a policy of no overtime working and non-co-operation would take place from Monday, 15th January in the Assembly Shop and Stores areas. Employees would meet again on Thursday, 11th January to decide what further action would be taken.

ix) Representatives continued that they had been instructed by employees to seek an additional 5% above management's final offer, to restrict the number of Senior Inspectors being upgraded from 5c to 5b, an assurance from management that any agreed settlement would be reviewed mid-year and that the Managing Director should attend all further negotiations.

The Personnel Manager replied that he was very disappointed that employees felt a need to take such action and had thought that representatives and management were in a position of responsible collective negotiations.

x) Minute 163 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 162)

Special Meeting 9.1.1979

The Personnel Manager said that he was particularly disappointed that representatives had rejected management's offer as negotiations had been carried out in a spirit of goodwill with a high degree of integrity and responsibility on both sides.

The increase offered and bonus negotiated at September, 1978, had yielded total increases of between 20.5% (£10.50) and 26% (£16.84) since the last principal increase in January 1978. The average increase of 23% was substantially ahead of inflation and direct taxation had also been reduced during this period, also a number of individual increases had also been awarded during this period. The Company could not offer or justify a further 5% above its present offer, as claimed by representatives, and in threatening the Company with a one day stoppage, overtime ban, non-co-operation and further mass meetings, the management would need to take certain measures to protect the Company.

x) The Personnel Manager stated that should sanctions take place, management would not negotiate under duress and would cease overtime with immediate effect. No payments would be made to any employee who took part in any stoppage, attendance bonus and sick pay included. If a policy of non-co-operation resulted in a reduction in output, the 6.9% Productivity Bonus would be reduced accordingly.

The integrity of the Company to its customers would need to be maintained and would result in orders being re-routed to competitors. This would affect future sales, profitability, and ultimately jobs, as had happened to one of the Company's suppliers. Management were not prepared to support employees having mass meeting on Thursday, 11th January, and would not be prepared to pay for any time lost at such meeting.

The Personnel Manager concluded by saying that confrontation was not in either sides interest and he asked representatives to reconsider any action regarding sanctions.

Representatives replied that they could not agree with managements figures and did not view the attendance bonus as an increase in wages due to the conditions imposed. They felt that employees could not rely on bonuses which may be withdrawn and wished to seek consolidation of the Productivity Bonus Scheme with an additional 5% on basic rates.

After further discussion concerning management and representative positions, the Meeting was adjourned at 11.30 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 12.15 p.m.

x) The Personnel Manager said that management were prepared to continue discussing with representatives provided employees were prepared to remove sanctions. It was agreed to adjourn the meeting at 12.25 p.m. so that representatives could consult with employees.

xi) Minute 164 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 163)
Special Meeting 9.1.1979
Representatives said that employees had decided to withdraw sanctions in the light of the intention to continue negotiations.

The Personnel Manager said there was nothing to be gained in applying sanctions for either side and he hoped that negotiations would continue in a constructive manner. Management generally felt that their offer had been fair and just about at the extent to which the company could afford. The increase offered by management had been worth 6.5% and he did not wish to mislead representatives into believing that the Company would be able to afford a package of 10%.

In reply, representatives said that they understood there was a need for compromise to achieve a settlement, but believed certain points would help to achieve the desired agreement. There was a consolidation of the 6.9% Productivity Bonus Scheme and a positive statement from management that wages would be reviewed in the mid-year if inflation increased substantially.

The Personnel Manager replied that to commit the Company to a review inside a 12 month period would be totally contrary to the spirit of pay policy. Management would continue to monitor the relationship of employees wage rate to local industry and any

xi) adverse effect inflation may have on employees' purchasing power.

The Meeting adjourned at 3.45 p.m. for management to examine representatives suggestions.

xii) Minute 165 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 164)

Special Meeting 16.1.1979

The Personnel Manager said that following employees' decision to withdraw the threat of sanctions, meaningful discussions could continue. The representatives were reminded that management had emphasised at the previous meeting that the present offer of an average increase of 6½% was very close to the limit the Company could afford and that representatives' demands for an increase of 10% was in excess of any offer the Company could afford.

The Company could not consolidate any bonus scheme due to the requirements for all productivity schemes to be self-financing and reviewable on a regular basis. However, there was little chance that the scheme would need to be removed and if productivity increased significantly this could justify increases above 6.9%.

Management were not prepared to enter into a formal arrangement regarding an interim review and would wish to abide by the 12 month rule. However, management would continue to closely examine general trends in wage settlements and ensure that wages kept in line with the policy of being in the top payers.

The Personnel Manager continued that management were prepared to review its offer to employees, it was emphasised that this offer

xii) would be the full extent of the Company's mandate. The proposal put forward was for an average increase of 8% which ranged from 7% for semi-skilled to just over 10% for skilled employees. This represented increases of between £3.60 and £4.80 per week for semi-skilled and £7.20 per week for skilled employees. Staff manual differentials would be retained and increases offered were £5.00 to semi-skilled supervision and £7.50 to skilled supervision. The new structure represented increases of between 23% and 27% since the last principal increase (January 1978) which was considerably above the inflation rate and present national settlement.

The meeting closed at 2.30 p.m. for representatives to consider management's proposals.

xiii) Minute 166 1979 Wage Review (Ex Min. 165)

Special Meeting 18.1.1979

Representatives said that they had held a mass meeting of all manual employees at which they put forward managements proposals for an increase averaging 8%. The result was that a substantial proportion of employees had voted to accept the offer.

The Chairman replied that he considered that negotiations had been carried out in a constructive manner and was sure that both Management and Representatives were satisfied with the outcome of negotiations and the manner in which they were conducted.

It was confirmed that increases would be backdated to 1st January 1979 and that all back-pay would be paid in the paypackets for Friday, 2nd February 1979.

xiii) There being no other business, the Meeting closed at 3.00 p.m.

xiv) 29.1.1979 - Minute 167 (Ex Min. 166)

Management and Negotiating members report results officially back to full Works Committee.

Appendix F

BESTOBELL MOBREY LIMITED.

EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1. Extended leave of absence may be granted to employees who wish to visit close relatives outside the U.K. Normally this will only apply to personnel wishing to travel outside of Western Europe, e.g. Australia, U.S.A. Canada or Asia. Agreement for such leave must be given by the employee's Departmental Executive after consultation with the Personnel Manager.

2. This leave will only be available to employees who have more than three years continuous service with the Company.

3. The employee must give at least one months notice in writing of his/her wish to take extended leave.

4. A minimum of three weeks from the current years annual holiday entitlement must be taken during the extended leave period. In addition an employee may forgo up to three weeks leave entitlement in the preceeding year to take in this extended leave period if he/she wishes. If this is done and the employee does not take extended leave the employee will lose whatever holiday entitlement he/she has held back from the previous year.

5. The maximum leave available (inclusive of any hoiday entitlement accrued) will be 8 weeks.

6. Payment will only be made prior to the extended leave for holiday entitlement already accrued. The balance of holiday pay owing will be paid at the end of the first week following the employees return to work in the case of hourly and weekly paid employees or at the end of the first month following the employees return to work in the case of monthly paid employees.

7. Normal sick pay arrangements are suspended during the entire period of extended leave, paid and unpaid. Production Bonus payment will only be paid with respect to period of paid holiday absence and not for any additional unpaid holiday.

8. Extended leave of absence will normally be granted not more frequently than once in three years. Personnel wishing to exceed this limit may be required to terminate their employment.

9. An employee granted extended leave will be required to sign an agreement accepting Conditions attached to the granting of extended leave, prior to his/her departure. The employee will receive a copy of this letter which will include a date for return to work.

10. Before an employee leaves on extended leave, he/she will be required to provide the Personnel Department with a U.K. address where all monies owing etc. can be forwarded should the employee not return on the agreed date. The employee should also provide an address where he/she can be contacted while on holiday.

11. An employee not returning to work from extended leave, on the agreed date for whatever reason, will have his/her employment terminated automatically and will be deemed to have so terminated his/her employment by frustrating an expressed term for granting extended leave.

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